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JOHN BULL

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The world is a bundle of hay;
Mankind are the asses who pull;
Each tugs it a different way,
And the greatest of all is John Bull

—BYRON.

Edited by
HORATIO BOTTOMLEY.

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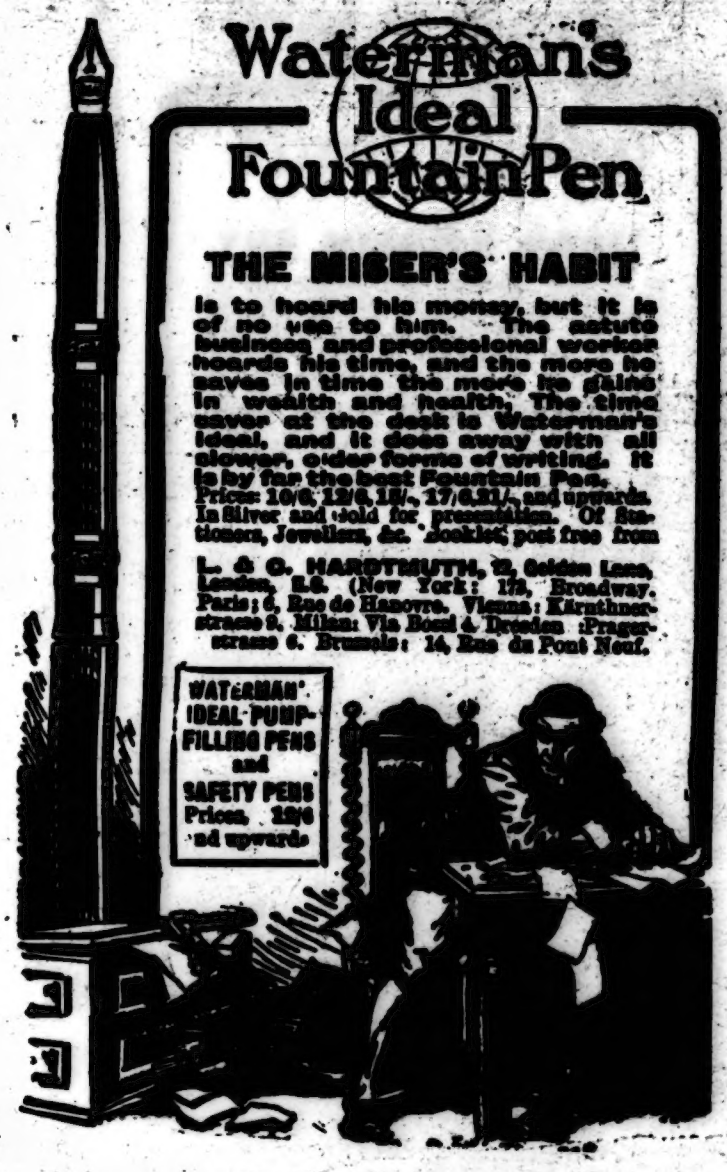

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THE WORLD, THE FLESH, AND THE DEVIL.

[*The Editor discourses upon passing events and topics of the day.*]

We have now formulated a plan for a Defence Fund which, after mature consideration, we have decided to establish in connection with the pending prosecution, *Rex v. Bottomley and others*. For weeks past we have been inundated with offers of financial assistance to ease the heavy burden thrown upon us in order to secure for our co-defendants the best legal aid obtainable; but whilst, we trust, in no way lacking in appreciation of the generosity which has prompted these proposals, we have throughout felt that, whatever intermediate relief we might accept at the hands of our readers and other friends, the ultimate burden should fall upon our own shoulders alone. We have, accordingly, devised a scheme which we trust and believe will best meet the case, and which—whilst giving us the benefit and encouragement of a widespread public support—will not involve our friends in any financial sacrifice. After all, the defence is our concern, although in having its pecuniary burden made easier to bear, a great load will be lifted from our shoulders. We do not propose to make any public announcement in connection with the matter, but shall be happy to forward particulars to such of our readers as may be disposed to co-operate.

Wherever one goes one is met by expressions of surprise over the mildness of recent months and the sudden apparition of frost. But, after all, when we remember that winter begins on December 23rd, there is nothing very surprising in the fact that it did not make its outward and visible appearance until the 28th. In any case it would be an excellent innovation if people would make up their minds to give up conversing about the weather, as to which nothing original or entertaining remains to be said. Here is an excellent opportunity for those who are in the habit of making good resolutions for the New Year.

It is announced that the next exhibition at Shepherd's Bush is to represent the pleasure and health resorts of Europe and America. When we remember that the attractions of those places consist exclusively of climatic effects, which are not capable of transportation, and of gambling and other amusements, which would not be permitted in this respectable land, we may safely predict that the show will resemble the play of "Hamlet" with the Prince of Denmark left out.

We do not know whether a Sandown (I. of W.) reader is pulling our leg, but this is what he tells us:—

> Fitz J. Spoffoth, the strong man, was recently swimming and diving in Sandown Bay, when he suddenly found something large and smooth in his arms, and thinking it might be a person in danger of drowning, decided to attempt a rescue. After a long and exciting struggle he succeeded in bringing the object to land, but was then surprised and disgusted to find it was only a submarine.

It seems high time that a Liberal Government should introduce that most Liberal of institutions, the Referendum. Again and again the Opposition has been in a position to assert that the Ministry is not in harmony with the country. At present, the only way of testing this assertion is by means of the costly and troublesome process of a general election. How much simpler it would be, when the House of Lords throws out a Government measure, to invite the existing voters to express their opinions, aye or no, on its merits. The whole machinery is already in existence, and it would only be necessary to open polling booths, appoint returning officers, and invite the electorate to express their views. The operation would not be very expensive, and there would be none of the complications at present imparted to elections by the character of candidates and the compliments of their wives. If the country endorsed a measure, the House of Lords would have to give way; if the Government were defeated, it would naturally resign. We are not sure that a bill would be necessary for this innovation, and we suggest that Mr. Asquith should make a preliminary experiment with—the Licensing Bill. Not even the most crusted Tory could raise any objection.

"Bonham, Ward and Co." have evidently found a home for their alleged Indian children, and are now establishing their knighthood of industry by the following advertisement:—

> A School Wanted for Boy aged six. Must be near London. Terms according to accommodation and status of school. References to parents of present pupils absolutely necessary.—Bonham, Ward, and Co., 51, Great Portland Street, Oxford Circus, W.

Observe that this is intended to draw the proprietor of every school for small boys. We are prepared to eat our hats if every applicant is not invited to pay a fee in advance in return for the vain hope of securing a boy of six who, in all probability, is about as real as the Anglo-Indian children of recent notoriety. Once more we ask: Where *is* the Public Prosecutor?

A nurse informs us that, having taken a large house for maternity cases, she saw an advertisement of Bonham, Ward and Co., wanting a home for two ladies who were prepared to pay 3½ guineas per week. The answer was a request for one guinea and a promise of patients for twelve months. She parted with her money, but has only received a number of names and addresses, from which no replies were forthcoming. Where is the Public Prosecutor?

Probably there is not another country in the world so full of leagues and societies for so many divergent objects as is England. Hardly a week passes which does not mark the birth of a new one, *anti* or *pro*. By this time they probably amount to uncounted hundreds or even thousands; and still they come. The latest born is the League for the Propagation of Brown Bread, headed by the Duchess of Portland, and supported by many prominent representatives of the medical profession. There is no doubt whatever that brown bread is a great deal more nourishing than white bread. It may almost be said, indeed, that the whiter the bread the less nourishing it is. Weight for weight, therefore, the poorer classes would obtain more nourishment at the same, or even at less, cost from brown bread than from white; but the new league will probably have a great deal of difficulty in persuading them into the substitution. To convince the reason is one thing; to train the palate is another.

The secretary of the Committee for Opposing Female Suffrage writes asking us to allow him to add our name to the Committee. "By joining us," he says, "you will not pledge yourself to take any active part in the movement, nor will you incur any liability of any kind, but it is very necessary that we should know at once on whose sympathy we may rely in our campaign." With many thanks, we therefore let him know at once that he cannot rely on ours. The Committee is years after the fair, and the lords, ladies, and gentlemen who form it are now beating the air. The Parliamentary vote for women has long been a just thing denied. In any future Reform Bill it must become a political expediency granted. Both in justice and expediency every argument against it has been smashed, pulverised and pounded. The Committee for Opposing Female Suffrage have lost the cause before they have commenced the fight.

We respectfully associate ourselves with the sympathy which the Queen has expressed to General Booth in connection with the operation he has undergone for cataract. At seventy-nine the old Salvation warrior is still young in spirit and action. Nothing of the fire has gone out of his energy, even if something of the strength has gone out of his voice. But age has not dimmed, or custom staled his infinite variety; and when he emerges from his darkened room with his sight restored, we shall no doubt see him bobbing about as merrily as an apple in a posset, here, there, and everywhere. Good luck to the wonderful old man.

The Sydney prize fight has brought the usual crop of homilies in a section of the Press. The *Daily News*, the largest circulated Sunday-school organ in Bouverie Street, thinks it "proves that the more brutal side of man's nature changes very little from age to age." Except that it would have made nonsense of this sweeping generalisation, it might have added that the less brutal side of man's nature changes very little from age to age also. Our tastes in fighting may be somewhat bizarre, but we would rather see a hundred thousand Johnsons battering a hundred thousand Burnses than a hundred thousand British soldiers shooting down and slashing at a hundred thousand German ditto. If the nations would only go out to fight with four-ounce gloves instead of with maxims, bayonets, and swords, they would not be any the longer in settling their quarrels, and would have millions of pounds to spare at the end for sticking-plaster and other requisites.

No doubt it is rather elementary civilisation for two men to batter each other with their fists till one or the other has had enough to keep his memory green, but when you come to consider that a few days after the battering and the blood-letting is over both victor and vanquished are as whole and sound as ever, it not only says much for the toughness of the human hide, but much also for the comparative harmlessness of the combat under the rules and the referee. The truth is, pugilists are trained to a fine physical hardness, and except by accident no harm comes to any of them. All which leads to the conclusion that it is about time that another Hague Conference was assembled to discuss the advantages of reducing national armaments to the dimensions of the four-ounce glove.

We talk about the unpaid magistracy and think justice would be better assured if stipendiaries took their place. Perhaps on the whole it would be; but some of the stipendiaries act strangely. As here: A bill-poster, named Richardson, had been doing badly. He was given some fly posting to do by the firm to whom we are indebted for the facts upon which this note rests. The man saw an empty shop and posted a bill upon the front. A policeman caught him in the act, and would not let him remove the bill. He was taken before a magistrate and sentenced to pay 42s. or to go to prison for a month. He had no money, —so is in gaol.

Holy Writ warns us to beware of the man of whom all speak well. All speak well of Sir Edward Grey as Foreign Secretary, but there must be some to whom the Biblical precept is recalled when they read of his doings. Half a century ago Lord John Russell won a dangerous notoriety by his fondness for lecturing the Powers, and meddling in matters better left alone. Sir Edward Grey seems to be following in the footsteps of the famous but much over-rated little Whig. Take the quarrel in the South-East of Europe. Austria annexes Bosnia and Herzegovina. It does not matter to England whether these States are part and parcel of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, or only "protected" by it. Bulgaria declares her independence. Again no English interest is affected. Servia and Montenegro clamour for "compensation." Whether they get it or not is no business of England. It is impossible to imagine a quarrel that concerns us less, but from the beginning Sir Edward Grey has been fussing and fuming. It was he who took the lead in protest which has been ignored; he who proposed the Conference, which is stillborn; he who instructed our new Ambassador at Vienna to make a long statement to the Emperor as to what Sir Edward Grey thinks of the situation—to which the Emperor declined to listen. Why should England push herself to the front in these ticklish affairs? Protest against the violation of the Treaty of Berlin is one thing, a proposition or a lecture quite another.

It is time for Great Britain to join in the fray when her direct interests are concerned. If Germany sought to annex Holland or to close the Baltic; if France seized Ceuta; if Russia annexed Persia, or Japan meddled with Australia; British interests would be directly affected, and we should have to interfere even if we knew that war would be the inevitable result. But why should we interfere in South-East Europe? If the people of those countries want to fight, let them fight. Bismarck, who was one of the half dozen statesmen of the last century, said that the affairs of these

countries did not concern Germany to the extent of the life of a single Pomeranian soldier. That is just as true of us. Since in the opinion of the great German no German interest was involved, Germany stood aloof. It would be well for England if Sir Edward Grey would imitate the Prince in his reserve.

Mr. Francis, the magistrate at the Westminster Police Court, is evidently a kind, discriminating gent. During the course of a visit to the Army and Navy Stores, a lady who "belonged to a highly respectable family" and who refused, as her advocate put it, "for obvious reasons to disclose her name and address," purloined several articles and hid them in her muff. At the subsequent police court proceedings it was urged on her behalf that, though it was impossible to plead kleptomania, the lady "suffered from a bad form of anæmia"; but it was not revealed whether she suffered from toothache or bunions. However, the magistrate said he "did not wish to deal with the lady except in a lenient way, and he would accept her medical man's recognizances in £20 to come up for judgment within twelve months, if called upon to do so." We are not concerned to ask the old familiar question, what would have happened if a poor woman had been detected lifting the goods, instead of the highly respectable lady aforesaid, because the very next day Mr. Francis gave us a concrete illustration. But the highly respectable lady should try to quit her anæmia as soon as possible, for if it persists, it is not improbable that next Christmas she will not be at home to visitors. Meanwhile, we observe, with full approval, that Mr. Francis protests against "any twopenny paper" having the "impertinence" to comment on this case. He is quite right. But penny journals, like JOHN BULL, may perhaps be graciously permitted to do so.

It appears that Mrs. Carrie Nation, the utterly too teetotal saloon-smasher of Texas, will make her first appearance in London as a music-hall turn at a salary of £50 a week. It is clear that Carrie is managed like any other star. "Believe me," says Mr. Paul Murray, "she is a shrewd business woman, and a good comedy artist." This we have not the slightest difficulty in believing after the announcement that while the good lady was on the smash with her chopper in America, her agent secured for her 150 dollars a day for seven days a week, a total of £210 a week; which proves that she didn't pause in her wild career even on Sundays. She is now having made replicas of her devastating chopper, and these are to be sold, also for the financial profit of Carrie, at the low charge of sixpence each during her London visit. Rates for locks of her hair will probably also be quoted in due course. Early application is, however, specially requested, as the supply is limited.

Lord Rosebery has done some queer things in his time, but probably none queerer than that of lecturing Scotsmen on the value of thrift. His excursus at Edinburgh in this department of finance reminds us of nothing so much as the lady who sells shells on the seashore. If the salvation of the souls of Scotsmen depended exclusively on the virtue of thrift, not one would be lost, and the Wee Frees and the Big Frees might close all their churches instanter. Thrift in Scotland is the corner stone of the national life. It has largely built up that strong self-reliance and that sturdy independence of character which distinguish the Scot wherever and whenever you find him. And, since every quality is said to have its defect, it probably accounts in large measure for the fact that few Jews can enter Scotland and live. If we Englishmen practised thrift as the Scot practises it, many more thousands of us would be able to keep this side the poverty line, instead of finding ourselves frequently helpless at the other side, through the hard grind of the industrial and commercial mill. We have yet to learn the meaning of the proverb, that to him who wears a shoe, the whole world is covered with leather. From all of which it will be seen that we do not associate ourselves with the sentiments expressed in the first instalment of our new feature, "Cross-Examinations," by the brilliant Mr. Herbert Vivian.

Dr. Josiah Oldfield is reported to have made a speech saying "that if they wanted to make a person abstinent they could do it by taking away his flesh diet. This had been proved by ancient writers, and also by the Bible, because it was Noah who was the first meat-eater and also the first drunkard." Is not this somewhat of a reflection upon Providence, who drowned all the teetotalers and vegetarians and left the repopulation of the world to this flesh-eating toper? Dr. Oldfield may thank his stars that the blasphemy laws are in abeyance. And so, by the way, may the editor of *The Christian*. See his comments on the Italian earthquake, concluding with a reference to God's "loving mercy over all His works."

Referring to our recent Open Letter to the Grimsby magistrates, who punished an unfortunate man for the terrible crime of sleeping out, a correspondent writes: "I am an ex-sergeant, Christian and abstainer, have tramped the roads in search of work. Have slept under hedges and stacks. Have lain under trees to escape the drizzling rain, hungry, footsore, and weary. To have been caught sleeping out without visible means of subsistence would doubtless have found me in a similar plight to that of the agricultural labourer. Some of the magistrates who thus abuse their privileges should be made to undergo the experiences, in kind, of those they have sentenced." It is certainly high time that some legislation were passed, making it impossible for tyrannical magistrates to annoy people who are unfortunate enough not to possess the price of a night's lodging.

We have extracted the following quaint paragraph from a Yorkshire paper:—

> Two Nottingham boys, named George Fisher and Robert Palmer, stretched a rope across the street and tripped up a pedestrian named Smith, fracturing his arm. For their bit of fun they had to pay half-a-*crowd* on Saturday.

As 2s. 6d. would be a ludicrously inadequate fine for such a wanton piece of mischief, we can only imagine that there has been no misprint, and hope that the crowd was large and thirsty. But why only half the crowd?

A Mr. Henry Boyce, manager of the firm of B. A. Smith and Co. (late Boyce Bros.), agents for various continental druggists, appears to be very much annoyed with us for having printed the German Emperor's love-letter. He says the manner in which we do "actually publish same" is, as he has "no hesitation in affirming, the act of a low-down scoundel" (*sic*). We should be more obliged by the information if we took the remotest interest in the opinions, hesitations or affirmations of the said Henry Boyce, of Aldgate and Woodford. The fact that his firm was formally Boyce Bros., and has now been reduced to the ranks as B. A. Smith and Co., leads us to infer that he may be a disappointed man. We will not, therefore, be too hard upon him or give him our opinion of his manners, but leave him to the enjoyment of continuing to import Fossilol, Piscarol, and other sweet-sounding compounds.

A hornet's nest has been stirred up in Campbeltown by our Open Letter to Bailie McMurchy, who recently sentenced a child to a day's imprisonment for pilfering a bar of chocolate from a local shop. Several of our readers in that quarter of the world have written in

manful support of the Bailie. One of them, indeed, tells us that his "efforts for the welfare of the youth of this district merit and receive the unstinted praise of the most upright citizens of our town," though in this matter "he *may* have been slightly indiscreet." Very well, then let it be written that in imprisoning a child for four-and-twenty hours, and thus making a criminal of him, the good man may have been slightly indiscreet.

There is some discernment in the recent saying of the Duchess of Sutherland that "we live in a transition period; the old days of patronage and of the rich being kind to the poor are coming to an end." Though her grace did not say so, she probably perceives that we are fast approaching the day when an appeal will have to be made to the poor to be kind to the rich. When that day comes it is hoped the appeal will not be in vain; if it is, then heaven help the rich.

By-the-way, it is a pleasure to take note of the announcement, made while our Open Letter to the Duke of Westminster was in the press, that the notices withdrawing his grace's pensions to the men and women over seventy on the Eaton estate in view of the Old Age Pensions Act do not express his wishes. The notices were sent out by the agent, presumably by his grace's direction, but the severe comments they have aroused have apparently induced him to think better of his intention. What he now says in effect is that they really meant that all his pensioners over seventy were to have their pensions continued to them, their rights under the Old Age Pensions Act notwithstanding. That is to say, though the circulars said one thing, they meant another. Good news is always welcome, and we shall not, therefore, be critical of the explanations by which it is accompanied.

That abnormal individual, W. T. Stead, has been breaking out again with hallucinations about his alleged intimacy with the dead. Writing in one of the monthly reviews, he asserts, "I have the gift of automatic writing." The ordinary conception of that operation is that, when a person holds a pencil and allows it to wander over paper, he writes words or phrases either consciously or unconsciously or subconsciously. It is possible that the writing is produced by a more or less dormant portion of the brain, such as that which supplies dreams to sleepers. Very often, we believe, the writer knows very well what he is about, particularly when he is trying to tell fortunes. Mr. Stead, however, goes one better than the ordinary exponent of this foolishness. He says he has "a lady friend"—you see that his interest in music-hall performers has led him to adopt their vernacular—and he informs us that she "can write with my hand at any distance with even more freedom than she can with her own." In ordinary life those who write with other people's hands often risk the loss of their freedom. This "lady friend," however, appears to enjoy a spiritual intimacy with the author of "Modern Babylon." When he took up his pencil one day, she wrote an account of an attempt to kiss her in the train, how she broke her umbrella over an old man and began to fear that he would master her. Taxed with this episode, the "lady friend" owned up, but asserted that the details were not quite accurate. Then we have a fine cock-and-bull story about a spirit photograph of a dead Boer, who obligingly gave his name to the photographer. Why do respectable journals publish such nonsense, or, if they must, why don't they make their contributors at least pretend to authenticate it?

We quite admit that the Boer story is well told—but we fear it is not evidence. During the Boer war, Stead says that the spirit of an old Boer entered the studio of a certain photographer, "a very old and rather illiterate man, a clairvoyant and clairaudient," in company with himself and a friend; that while there, the photographer took the photograph of the spirit of said old Boer, who in reply to a mental question of said photographer, inaudibly stated that his name was Piet Botha, with whom neither said Stead, said friend, nor said photographer was acquainted. After the war was over, Stead sent said spirit photograph to General Botha, per Mr. Fischer, Prime Minister of the old Orange Free State. Said Fischer told Mr. Wessels, a Free State delegate, of the said photograph, and said Fischer immediately recognised it as that of a near relative, said Piet Botha, who was the first Boer commandant killed at the siege of Kimberley. It seems to have taken Stead a mighty long time to get this story into the papers; but our chief objection to it is that the friend he took with him was not a member of the Royal Photographic Society, did not bring his own unopened packet of plates with him, and did not place them in the camera with his own hands. Funny thing that all these wonderful phenomena happen when nobody is about—except spiritualists. "No one in England, as far as I have been able to ascertain," says Stead, "knew that Piet Botha ever existed." Nobody, that is to say, except "the very old and rather illiterate photographer," who had previously managed to possess himself of an already published portrait or photograph. We know that photographer.

Though we are well aware that having no visible means of subsistence is a serious offence under the laws of this most Christian country, there seems no good reason why the bench of magistrates at Malling, in Kent, should not exercise a humane discretion in awarding punishment for it. They have had before them the case of a woman and her two daughters, who were discovered by a policeman occupying an outhouse on a farm. According to the policeman, they had no bedclothes of any kind, and their only food was half a loaf of dry bread wrapped in a piece of wet sacking. When they were ejected from their cottage six weeks ago their sole effects consisted of a few bags filled with chaff. "The two younger prisoners," says the court reporter, "carried infants in their arms, and their condition excited the sympathy of everyone in court"; apparently including the magistrates, for they bound over the two girls on condition that they went into Malling Workhouse. But by the time they came to consider the case of the mother, their sympathy frizzled out, and they sentenced her—to fourteen days' imprisonment! Why the magistrates made this distinction between the woman and her daughters is only to be explained on the supposition that they do not think gaol is a fit place for infants-in-arms; and so far we agree. Surely, however, acquittal in the one case having been decided on, the magistrates would not have greatly overstrained their judicial conscience if they had granted it in the other.

While the Barrow Guardians have been abolishing drink, the Hay Guardians have been abolishing food, apparently not so much in the interests of digestion as in those of economy. It has hitherto been the rule at Hay that the inmates of the workhouse should have a meat dinner on Tuesdays, at a total cost of 10s. 6½d. a week. One of the members of the Board recently discovered, however, that if Tuesday's dinner consisted of bread and cheese, the cost would be only 5s. 1d. per week. "£13 a year is worth saving," said the Rev. Hubert Griffith, a member of the Board. Adopting this view of the economics of the situation, the Guardians carried the motion for the bread and cheese, and in that workhouse henceforward Tuesdays will probably be red letter days in the annals of stomachic disturbance. The Guardians will save money; but it looks as if they are raising up a heap of work for the doctor—and the undertaker.

We like the plain commonsense of Mr. Alderman Guthrie, the magistrate who heard the case against an alleged refractory pauper. The man was a destitute labourer, and he applied for admission to the City of London casual ward on a Friday night. He was then told that he would not be allowed out until Monday morning. The man completed the tasks allotted to him, and on Sunday morning applied personally to the master for his discharge. "He treated me like a stray dog instead of a man," said this casual, in evidence. "I merely said, politely, 'Can you let me go to-day, as I have a chance of obtaining work?' And he deliberately turned round and said, 'You shall not go.'" "He refused to go back to the ward," was the evidence of the master, "so I ordered the porter to put him in a cell for disorderly conduct." Where the disorderly conduct came in the master was unable to explain, nor could the solicitor to the guardians; and with a sharp expression of his opinion that the man had been badly treated, the Alderman discharged him. It is, in fact, not the conduct of the man, but that of the master, which is open to objection. He appears to have acquired a swelled head, and to imagine that the casual ward of a workhouse is a sort of gaol where men who have done their tasks may not only be deprived of right of exit, but pushed into a cell, kept there, and subsequently taken before a magistrate to answer a charge of addressing him in an unauthorised manner. The sooner the guardians put the master right on this matter, the better.

A correspondent writes to ask us to "explain the use and purpose" of the Thames Valley Legitimist League. It is of no earthly, or heavenly, use to anybody, as far as we can see, and its object appears to be to supply humour to the more comic papers. Its members meet at intervals at Kew Green to toast "the heiress of the Royal House of Stuart," who appears to be somebody foreign nobody ever hears of otherwise; to pass inane resolutions of congratulation, or condolence, or something to Don Carlos, Duke of Madrid; to hang an annual wreath on the statue of King Charles I., who lost his head in a dispute with a gentleman called Cromwell, and to depose, by word of mouth, King Edward VII. from the throne of these realms. At last hearing it was unanimously passing a resolution "regretting that the City of Westminster had been polluted by the erection of a statue to the Dutch usurper, William of Orange." Where is the Public Prosecutor?

We read in the *Daily Express* that "Mme. Steinheil underwent another trying experience at the *hands* of the examining magistrate yesterday." Evidently a very searching examination.

WORRIED LOOKS.—X.

BURNS AND BRUISES.

"John Bull's" Biscuits.

For publishing the following news about Venezuela: "Senor Gomez will assume the control of the Govern- in the region of the kidneys."

THE BELFAST EVENING TELEGRAPH
TAKES THE BISCUIT.

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*For stating that "*THE REFRESHMENTS *were a special feature in that all the pastries, sandwiches, sweets, coffee, claret* AND A PAIR OF KNICKERS, *eight dessert knives, cup, and lemonade were prepared by seven members of the club, working like Trojans from* 11 *a.m. till the hour fixed for commencing."*

THE HACKNEY & STOKE NEWINGTON RECORDER
TAKES THE BISCUIT.

For reporting that "in one instance a QUARTETTE *was given in which there were eight playing on one piano."*

THE ST. HELEN'S NEWSPAPER & ADVERTISER
TAKES THE BISCUIT.

For stating that Mme. Steinheil "was unable to sleep, but this morning she was again awakened at 7."

THE DAILY CHRONICLE
TAKES THE BISCUIT.

For stating that "his machine feeds the paper in from an ENDLESS *roll, which is about* 200 *ft. long."*

SIR HIRAM MAXIM
TAKES THE BISCUIT.

For stating that President Roosevelt's "party will be composed of six persons including his son Kermit, who will kill big game AS WELL AS THE OTHER MEMBERS."

THE JERSEY EVENING POST
TAKES THE BISCUIT.

For announcing that "Portsmouth were beaten AT HOME *by* 4–3 AT NORTHAMPTON."

LLOYD'S NEWSPAPER
TAKES THE BISCUIT.

For the information that "two old ladies who were born at Bayonne on Nov. 15, 1908, *gave a midnight supper and took part in a torchlight procession."*

THE PEOPLE
TAKES THE BISCUIT.

For stating that the daughter of the LATE *Mr. Arthur Wilson was given away by her* FATHER.

HEARTH & HOME
TAKES THE BISCUIT.

For stating that "both the bride and the bridegroom, THE LATTER OF WHOM WAS DRESSED IN A PINK HAT AND BROWN TRAVELLING COSTUME, *walked to the church, and after the ceremony left together on foot."*

THE EVENING NEWS
TAKES THE BISCUIT.

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*For relating about a character in one of his stories that "*THEOLOGICALLY, *he was prompter; practically, he was everything, everywhere."*

MR. ARTHUR APPLIN
TAKES THE BISCUIT.

For stating that a missing steamer "was built on the Wear in 1907," *and that "Captain F. Coode has been her master since* 1899."

THE DAILY TELEGRAPH
TAKES THE BISCUIT.

For giving The Tigress as the winner of the Southern Counties Handicap Steeplechase, and then stating that "Black Ivory drew out clear of The Tigress, with Peter the Great last, and making all the running, won by six lengths."

THE EVENING STANDARD
TAKES THE BISCUIT.

For stating that "Jos. Wild, who has sent in a claim for 12 *correct results, has not done so."*

THE BRISTOL EVENING TIMES
TAKES THE BISCUIT.

CROSS-EXAMINATIONS.

By HERBERT VIVIAN.

I.—LORD ROSEBERY ON THRIFT.

Mr. VIVIAN.—Now, Rosebery, I see that you have removed your hat and taken the oath after the Christian fashion. Kindly tell my Lord whether you regard it as morally binding on your conscience.

ROSEBERY.—Why not, pray?

Mr. VIVIAN.—I must remind you that you are not here to ask me questions, but to answer those which I put to you. Do you, or do you not, regard the Christian oath as morally binding on your conscience?

ROSEBERY.—Yes, I do.

Mr. VIVIAN.—But I understand that you have very intimate relations with Israelites in your business, in society, and in your family?

ROSEBERY.—That does not make me a Jew.

Mr. VIVIAN.—Will you please understand that you are not here to argue? Wait till I ask you a question and then answer it to the best of your ability. May I take it that your mind and temperament and general attitude are thoroughly hebraicised?

ROSEBERY.—I certainly have great sympathies with the chosen people.

Mr. VIVIAN.—If you will do me the favour of paying attention to my questions, you will save the time of the Court. Do you, or do you not, consider yourself utterly hebraicised?

ROSEBERY.—No, I am a Scotsman.

Mr. VIVIAN.—That is a distinction without a difference. But I take your answer. At any rate, in the matter of thrift, you observe the Hebrew-Scottish attitude?

ROSEBERY.—Surely that is a matter of opinion.

Mr. VIVIAN.—Come now, Rosebery, you are not a child. You have been Prime Minister of England and must understand plain English, even though you do call yourself a Scotsman. However, I will condescend to your vernacular. Do you consider canniness the chief of all the virtues?

ROSEBERY.—If by canniness you mean thrift, I certainly think it is the most practical of them all. After all, it only means getting full value for your money, avoiding debt, and the consequent advantage obtained over those who do not meet their obligations.

Mr. VIVIAN.—Then may I take it that you consider thrift a laudable object, an aim in life?

ROSEBERY.—Certainly.

Mr. VIVIAN.—Have you ever read Johnson's Dictionary?

ROSEBERY.—That is a large order.

Mr. VIVIAN.—I am not asking you that. Are you fairly well acquainted with its contents?

ROSEBERY.—I may have glanced at it.

Mr. VIVIAN.—You may have ploughed a field or jumped over the moon. I am not at all concerned with what you may have done. Have you, or have you not, made yourself familiar with its contents? Come now, you profess to be more or less of a literary man. Have you the faintest knowledge, the most nodding acquaintance with that great work?

ROSEBERY.—I suppose I know it as other people do.

Mr. VIVIAN.—You are only trifling and wasting the time of the Court. "Other people" are not in the box on their oath. I suggest to you that you are utterly ignorant of the great majority of the definitions in Dr. Johnson's dictionary?

ROSEBERY.—I certainly could not quote it off-hand.

Mr. VIVIAN.—Not one single definition?

ROSEBERY.—Of course I remember that patriots are "factious disturbers of Government."

Mr. VIVIAN.—You remember only the obvious. I daresay you are also aware that oats are defined as "a grain, which in England is generally given to horses, but in Scotland supports the people"?

ROSEBERY (*smiling*).—And where will you find such people and such horses?

Mr. VIVIAN.—Your mirth is very unseemly. As Mr. Leno once remarked, you are to remember that this is a Court of Justice and not buffoonery. Besides, the quip is not even your own. Please be serious for a moment, if you can control your riotous ribaldry. Have you, or have you not, looked up the word thrift in Johnson's Dictionary?

ROSEBERY.—I do not remember.

Mr. VIVIAN.—Do you seriously ask my Lord to believe that you do not remember whether you troubled to look up the word in the dictionary before you went to deliver your lecture at the annual meeting of the Edinburgh Savings Bank?

ROSEBERY.—I mean, I do not remember what Johnson said.

Mr. VIVIAN.—Now you are prevaricating. I did not ask you whether you remembered what Johnson said, but whether you remembered looking up the word before you set out for North Britain. Are you so frequently consulting that particular dictionary that you cannot tell me whether you looked at it when you were preparing your oration?

ROSEBERY.—If you put it that way, I did not.

Mr. VIVIAN.—If I put it that way! How else could I put a plain question? Well, I take your answer. When about to deliver yourself of a long lucubration on the subject of thrift, you did not take the trouble to consult the greatest authority on the English language?

ROSEBERY.—One does not look up words in a dictionary before delivering a speech. One assumes that one has a certain elementary knowledge of elementary words in the English language.

Mr. VIVIAN.—"English language!" I thought that you were very punctilious about excluding the adjective English from the qualification of words shared by the inhabitants north of the Tweed. Did you look up thrift in any dictionary?

ROSEBERY.—No, I did not.

Mr. VIVIAN.—I am glad to have one straightforward answer at last. You have not consulted any dictionary. Would you be surprised to learn that Dr. Johnson defined thrift as "profit, gain, riches gotten, parsimony, frugality, a plant"?

ROSEBERY.—If you say so, I accept the statement.

Mr. VIVIAN.—Yet, in your speech at the meeting of the Edinburgh Savings Bank, you said, "there is a particular distinction between thrift and avarice." You have already accepted the definition of thrift as parsimony. Do you then contend that there is any serious distinction between parsimony and avarice?

ROSEBERY.—I have not the dictionary with me, but I imagine that most words are capable of various interpretations.

Mr. VIVIAN.—Here is the book. You shall see for yourself. Parsimony is given as "covetousness, niggardliness," avarice is given as "covetousness, insatiable desire." You see that there is not much to choose between them?

ROSEBERY.—You are arbitrarily choosing your own definitions. I am entitled to choose mine, and I make thrift to mean "frugality, good husbandry."

Mr. VIVIAN.—That is all very well, but you went a great deal further in your speech. Here is one of your sentences:—"Avarice is not generous, and, after all, it is thrifty people who are generous." Did you mean to imply that generosity is a part of thrift?

ROSEBERY.—I think I made my meaning quite clear. Without thrift there can be no material for generosity. The man who has squandered all his possessions has nothing left to give away.

Mr. VIVIAN.—Now you are begging the question. You are confusing thrift, which is the process of accumulation, with the results of thrift, namely, the hoarded fortune. Do you perceive the distinction?

ROSEBERY.—Yes; but——

Mr. VIVIAN.—Please do not wander off into a wordy explanation. I put it to you that thrift is the process of scraping and pinching and gathering money together. Do you still maintain that this is compatible with generosity?

ROSEBERY.—I think I am entitled to explain.

Mr. VIVIAN.—No, no. All you are entitled to do is to answer my questions. If my friend wants your explanation, he can afford you an opportunity on re-examination. I mean to have an answer. Is generosity in any way compatible with the actual process of hoarding money?

ROSEBERY.—No, I daresay it is not. But——

Mr. VIVIAN.—Kindly refrain from the use of the word "but." You have now admitted my point. Does that

lead you to reconsider your statement that "it is thrifty people who are generous"?

ROSEBERY.—No, it does not, for I was alluding to people whose thriftiness has afforded them an opportunity of exercising generosity.

Mr. VIVIAN.—In other words, thrifty people cease to be thrifty when they become rich?

ROSEBERY.—That is not the way I should put it, but you may have it your own way. As I pointed out in my speech, "all the great philanthropists and all the great financial benefactors, all that species of whom we have record, have been thrifty men."

Mr. VIVIAN.—Yes, "have been." You do not say that they are still. Am I to take it that, in your opinion, they suddenly change their whole natures and depart from one extreme to the other when they have made a fortune?

ROSEBERY.—They certainly are the principal subscribers to charities and relief funds.

Mr. VIVIAN.—Is that meant to be an affirmative answer to my question?

ROSEBERY.—I suppose it is.

Mr. VIVIAN.—Then will you kindly tell me at what precise period in their careers you imagine this marvellous change to take place?

ROSEBERY.—Of course, I do not allege that any such change takes place.

Mr. VIVIAN.—Then what do you allege?

ROSEBERY.—I allege that self-denial is one of the chief factors of thrift and that self-denial does not exclude generosity.

Mr. VIVIAN.—Now you are shifting your ground. But I will not waste the time of the Court by taking you all through the definitions again. Your answers are quite sufficient to illustrate the confusion of your mind. I will only remind you that you praised thrift for its effects on the formation of character. Does not this mean that the thrifty character becomes permanent, that there is no sudden change to open-handed generosity?

ROSEBERY.—But I have now suggested that the generosity remained latent all the time.

Mr. VIVIAN.—We will leave it at that. The best you can say for thrift is that it may possibly embrace latent virtues. Now there is one more point which I wish you to elucidate. You made a veiled attack on old age pensions, stating that your thrifty Scottish peasants "maintained their own aged parents, their own relations, and thought it a shame to take any money from the public or the State." Thought it a shame! Does this mean that they refused public money for public services? Did the Scottish soldier or sailor scornfully refuse his daily wage?

ROSEBERY.—Of course not.

Mr. VIVIAN.—When he retired from the public service, did he refuse any pension which he was entitled to look upon as deferred pay?

ROSEBERY.—No.

Mr. VIVIAN.—Do you seriously allege that there is any intrinsic difference between the deferred pay of the soldier or sailor and the old age pension, which, after all, is only the deferred pay of the veteran of industry?

ROSEBERY.—Yes, I see a very great distinction. Every aged person is not necessarily a veteran of industry.

Mr. VIVIAN.—But an aged person may be a veteran of industry?

ROSEBERY.—Oh, yes.

Mr. VIVIAN.—I did not ask you to ejaculate. You admit that veterans of industry do exist. Will you give me a single reason why they should not be entitled to relief, which I called deferred pay, at the hands of the State?

ROSEBERY.—I consider that they should be maintained by their own relations.

Mr. VIVIAN.—Why?

ROSEBERY.—It is a question of self-respect.

Mr. VIVIAN.—Whose? That of the pensioner or of his relations?

ROSEBERY.—Both, I imagine.

Mr. VIVIAN.—Let us take that of the pensioner first. Why is it more respectable for him to sponge on his relations than to accept an income from the State?

ROSEBERY.—He has some claim upon his family.

Mr. VIVIAN.—And none upon the State? Very well. Now let us take the point of view of the relations. Why should they be mulcted to bolster up an artificial notion of self-respect?

ROSEBERY.—No doubt it is a question of sentiment.

Mr. VIVIAN.—I quite agree, and a very mawkish kind of sentiment too. Now you have told us that your ideal Scottish peasants thought it a shame to take money from the State, that is to say to take old age pensions. When did they think it a shame?

ROSEBERY.—Well, they didn't do it.

Mr. VIVIAN.—I am not asking you that. When did they think it a shame?

ROSEBERY.—They would have thought it a shame.

Mr. VIVIAN.—That is quite another matter. When did they ever have an opportunity of taking public money in the shape of pensions?

ROSEBERY.—They never did.

Mr. VIVIAN.—Then how can you say that they thought it a shame?

ROSEBERY.—I suppose I expressed myself loosely. It was at a public meeting.

Mr. VIVIAN.—That is an explanation, but not an excuse. Will you now tell my Lord whether there have never been any workhouse in Scotland, whether a system of indoor or outdoor relief has never been known there?

ROSEBERY.—Of course there has been.

Mr. VIVIAN.—Then the Scottish peasants did take money from the public or the State?

ROSEBERY.—In that sense, yes.

Mr. VIVIAN.—Why "in that sense"? I put it to you that they took it in every sense of the word. Do you wish to reconsider your statement that they would have been ashamed to do anything of the kind?

ROSEBERY.—I had old age pensions in my mind.

Mr. VIVIAN.—Then this is your point. They would have been ashamed to accept a few shillings a week as pensions, but they were not ashamed to take a great deal more, either in money or in kind, so long as it was called relief, not a pension. Now I have a fairly clear insight into the value of your oath. You may stand down.

NURSERY RHYMES.—No. II.

Said the great lady author, Marie,
"It seems Mr. Shakespeare and me
Are celebrities quite,
If I judge by the sight
Of the pilgrims in Stratford I see."

BOTTOMLEY'S BOOK.

At the time of the Hansard Union Trial, sixteen years ago, was published "Horatio Bottomley, Hys Booke"—now long out of print. A new and revised edition, under the title, "Bottomley's Book," will shortly be issued, price one shilling.

"THE LAW'S A ASS."

By Douglas Walsh.

I.

Outside the sea was viciously grinding the shingle into more sand for the children to play with next year; and a fierce, cold north wind was picking up the spray and dashing it against the windows of the houses on the Marine Parade of the little seaside town of Tankerton-on-Sea. Inside—in a big, deserted boarding house—the landlady, a widow whose little all was invested in this most precarious of livelihoods, was seated, wondering how she was to get through the long winter months without running into debt.

The season was over, and it had been a poor one. All her servants had been dismissed. She was alone in the big house—alone with eleven bedrooms, and a bank-book which showed a balance of sixty pounds. Take away the rent—which must be paid—and the current bills, grocer, butcher, milkman, and the like, and there were but just nine pounds ten to keep her and clothe her for five long months—the net result of six months' toil, for which slavery is a weak and foolish word. As she sat there, lost in reverie, there fell upon her ears the sound of wheels coming along the front and then stopping outside. The bell pealed, and she went to the door. A man stood in the doorway—a tall, bearded, middle-aged man, who inquired in a pleasant voice, "Could she put him up for the week-end?"

"Certainly," she answered.

In the kitchen, as she began hastily to turn a tin of tomatoes into soup, and a mutton bone into a hash, Mrs. Blake wondered whether or not she would give her guest his meals by himself. It was a boarding-house, and she was accustomed to sit down with her visitors; but her servants were gone, and she was alone in the house with this man. It was a trivial, but difficult, point; finally, however, she decided that for to-night, at any rate, she would take her usual place at the head of the table. She was only thirty-five, and both in looks and in heart still young; he seemed a nice sort of man—and she liked company, though precious little of it would she have for the next five months.

As for Rupert Beavan, the middle-aged, bearded bachelor guest in question, when he found himself seated at the long boarding-house dining table with a young and attractive widow for sole companion, whom he "took a liking to" at once—he sighed!

"I've been making a round of boarding-houses all along the South Coast," he remarked, with deliberate significance, a little later; but Mrs. Blake only responded with "Oh, yes?" such birds of passage being by no means uncommon in the landlady's world.

"Can I have anything to drink?" he inquired.

"Oh, certainly. What would you like?"

"I should like a bottle of whisky," he answered, "if you've anyone you could send out for it."

"There's no need to send out for it," she said. "I've an uncorked bottle in the house. I always keep one to oblige my visitors."

She got up, fetched the whisky, and handed it to him.

"How much, please?" he asked, with another sigh.

"Three shillings and sixpence—that is what it costs me."

Very reluctantly he put his hand in his pocket and handed her the money.

"You'll give me a bill for it, I suppose?"

"Of course," she responded, a faint note of surprise in her tone.

* * * * *

He was very interested, was Rupert Beavan, in boarding-houses—or widows—I am not sure which. Very skilfully he led her on to talk about her life.

"They're awful—some people," she told him. "There was a woman here this year who was too dreadful for words—the kind of discontented, spiteful old maid who upsets everybody, and is capable of infecting the whole table with the same critical spirit. During dinner one evening I heard her say quite plainly while I was serving the sweets, 'I never eat custard made from egg powder at home, and I'm sure I'm not going to hese.' I should have loved to have thrown the custard over her and to have asked what she expected for twenty-five shillings a week—but I didn't."

"Ah! you must have a lot to put up with," Rupert agreed; "but I suppose you get not to mind."

Sunday passed on wings. By tea-time the man had discovered that they were alone in the house, and insisted upon helping her to wash up the tea things and prepare the evening meal. By bed-time they were the best of friends; they might have known each other for years—only occasionally the man grew thoughtful, and would sit musing for a minute or two, and then sigh.

On Monday he paid his bill and said "Good-bye."

"I shall hope to see you again next summer," she told him as they shook hands. And yet once more he sighed.

"Perhaps next time we meet you won't be so pleased to see me," he said, mysteriously, as he drove away.

II.

It had to be done—duty was duty. He was only a subordinate, acting under orders. It was hateful work, but he had to do it; only there was no one to prevent him telling himself secretly exactly what he thought of that "smart" superior of his who (in search of promotion) had hit upon this paltry scheme for calling attention to his cleverness.

"The law," said Rupert Beavan to himself—"the law's what Dickens called it, 'a ass,' and it's a brute as well to wreak its vengeance on a lot of poor, struggling women who break its letter, but not its spirit."

But Rupert was a servant of one branch of the law, and he duly made his application for a batch of summonses.

A policeman in uniform served the summons upon Mrs. Blake, and at first she couldn't believe it

"This can't be for me," she said. "There's some mistake."

"No, ma'am," said the constable, "there's no mistake."

Poor Mrs. Blake! She had all a woman's terror of the law, and she had only nine pounds ten in the world to get through the winter on. She couldn't understand the matter at all; she couldn't possibly afford to employ a solicitor, and she daren't appeal to her relations because of the terrible disgrace. She understood what it all meant, however, when on the day the summons became "returnable"—terrifying word!—she duly appeared in court. There, waiting to give evidence against her, on the charge of "selling intoxicating liquors without a licence" was Rupert Beaven, an Officer in His Majesty's Excise.

The angry widow turned upon him two eyes positively blazing with scorn and indignation—and Rupert Beavan cursed his duty yet once again, and thought at the same time that Mrs. Blake looked more charming than ever.

The magistrate was kind. He was very sorry, he said. But the Excise had raised this point, and he was bound to make an example of the cases before him. The Law was very explicit: no one must sell intoxicants without a licence.

"But I didn't sell him the whisky," Mrs. Blake protested. "I only obliged him."

The magistrate was both kind and patient.

"You obliged him," he explained, "by selling it. Had you taken his money first and sent a servant out to buy a bottle for him, we should have heard nothing of it; the Law would have been satisfied. But you sold him a bottle of whisky you had in the house. I sympathise with you, and I can quite understand your feeling aggrieved," he said; "but the Law is the Law, and, as an example and a warning to others, I must fine you five pounds and costs."

Half blind with tears, she stumbled out of the court, wondering what was to become of her now that five pounds and costs were coming out of that pitiful nine pounds ten!

She was directed by a sympathetic policeman to go along a certain corridor and turn to the left, to reach the office where the fine must be paid. Dejectedly she followed his directions--and came full upon Rupert Beavan, who blushed at sight of her.

"Er—Mrs. Blake," he said, stopping her. "Excuse me, but I—I—all this isn't my fault, you know. I have only been acting under orders. I had to do my duty, but the things you told me made me so sorry for you that—I hope you won't mind—I've—er—ventured to pay your fine."

"Thank you," she said, coldly. "No doubt you meant well, but I don't require charity. You trapped me into breaking the law, but I can pay my fine for myself."

"I am sorry," he explained, "but I fear that is too late now. The Law is a peculiar thing. The Law said you must pay five pounds and costs. I have paid that for you, and the Law is done with you; the transaction is closed and cannot be re-opened."

"Is this true?" she demanded.

"Don't you remember the Suffragettes and the Passive Resisters who were prevented from making themselves martyrs by similar tactics?" he enquired.

"I think the Law is a very foolish thing," Mrs. Blake declared.

"'A ass,' in fact," he laughed.

"The only thing for me to do now," she said proudly, "is to pay the money back to you."

This disconcerted him again; but as she fumbled with trembling fingers for her purse, he had an inspiration. He didn't say anything: he simply took hold of her in that police-court corridor, with a constable watching at the further end—and kissed her.

And the courtship is now busily proceeding.

OUR GENERALS.—IV.

LORD METHUEN.

BY VÉDETTE.

When Paul Sanford, Lord Methuen was appointed to command the troops in South Africa the question that rose to the lips of most people was—why? Probably he asked this question himself. General French is often spoken of, and not without reason, as the luckiest man in the British Army, but mature reflection compels one to the conclusion that this description really applies with greater truth to Methuen. He has been in the Army over forty years now, has done absolutely nothing of outstanding importance, and yet his is certain to be one of the first names considered when any big position becomes vacant. And, what is more, more often than not he gets the job.

NOT A HERO WITH THE RANKS.

It would be the merest folly to urge that Lord Methuen is popular in the Army. He is a Guardsman, and, taking the Service as a whole, it does not like Guardsmen. There is no reason why it should. With a few brilliant exceptions—Arthur Paget is one of them—Generals drawn from the Guards have not exactly covered themselves with glory of recent years, and there are none who can gauge as quickly and as surely the capabilities of a General as those who are called upon to serve under him. It would be incorrect, however, to say that the Army dislikes Methuen as it dislikes other Generals who might be named, or that it fears him as it fears, say, Kitchener. It simply distrusts him and his ability to get his troops out of a tight corner once he has landed them there.

A THEORETICAL OFFICER.

Yet it must not be imagined that Methuen is a bad soldier; far from it. In some respects he compares very favourably with some of his comrades. He has seen any amount of fighting since he received his "baptism of fire" on the Gold Coast in 1873, and he has the theory of war at his fingers' ends. He has probably read thousands of text-books in his time and thoroughly digested them. He knows exactly what to do according to the books, and what his opponent should do under any conceivable circumstances. When, however, the enemy declines to fight according to the text-books, and does something entirely different, Methuen is both surprised and puzzled. It might even be said that he is distinctly annoyed with his foe on these occasions. Methuen's good fortune deserts him in striking fashion so soon as he takes the field. If only Methuen could be assured of average good luck on these occasions, he might be depended upon to wriggle out of the situation somehow. But fortune and he part company so soon as the war clouds burst. There were men in South Africa who got into far worse corners even than Magersfontein, but they managed to get out of them again. When it came to Methuen's turn, however, down he went! It is only away from active service, then, that Fortune smiles upon him.

ALL RIGHT IN BARRACKS.

On the barrack square or the parade ground a better General than Lord Methuen is not to be found on the Active List at the present moment. He knows how to get every inch of work out of his men in the shortest possible time, and troops drilled under his direction, and upon a scheme drawn up by himself and not too much revised by the War Office, could be implicitly relied upon to hold their own whoever the foe might be. It is only in the field that his limitations are made plain, and even there there are worse men than he in command of British troops at the present day.

AND AT CEREMONIALS.

He shares with the late Sir Henry Trotter the reputation of having been the finest leader of the Guards upon ceremonial occasions in London that has ever been. He looked every inch a soldier as he rode through the streets of the Metropolis at the head of his troops, and he simply revels in the martial pomp and display of such occasions as the Diamond Jubilee of the late Queen Victoria. It is here, probably, that his talents chiefly lie, and certainly he could organise a military display upon a very large scale with a thoroughness and completeness of detail that very few could equal. The man who said recently that he would never allow Methuen to leave this country if he had his way, but would keep him at home constantly training troops in the science of modern warfare, was a good judge of character. Methuen in this direction has not many peers.

A CHARMING PERSONALITY.

Personally, and apart from soldiering, Lord Methuen is one of the most charming companions it would be possible to imagine. He has knocked about the world a good bit, and has picked up a fund of quaint anecdotes and reminiscences that he can relate in very agreeable fashion. He is one of the very few Guardsmen who is not a member of the Guards Club; indeed, he is not much of a clubman at all, and the only institution that bears his name on its books as a member is the Travellers Club, where he is usually to be found when in London.

A BIT OF A WIT.

He has, however, on occasions a pretty wit. One evening he sat in the Peers' Gallery of the House of Commons and listened to a debate upon the Army. As he passed out of the building he met a member with whom he had some acquaintance, who asked him what he thought of the debate. "I think I shall enter politics myself," was Methuen's reply. His friend laughed. "What on earth do you know about politics?" he asked. "Quite as much as most of those who have been speaking to-night know about the Army and its affairs," was Methuen's crushing rejoinder as he hailed a passing hansom.

A BERLIN INCIDENT.

While he was in Berlin he was the central figure in a striking little incident. At considerable personal risk he rescued a would-be suicide from the Spree under circumstances that displayed considerable personal courage. Shortly afterwards he was invited by the old Emperor William to a State Ball. Suddenly during the midst of the dancing the Emperor gave the signal to the band to cease playing. When absolute silence was obtained he summoned the astonished Methuen before him and pinned a large silver medal to his breast in commemoration of his brave act. It was one of those dramatic little scenes that the old Emperor so dearly loved.

HIS HOME LIFE.

Among his other claims to fame, Lord Methuen possesses the finest house and estate of any soldier on the active list. Corsham Court, near Devizes, dates back to the days of Elizabeth, and is one of the finest residences in the south-west counties. The park is very extensive and contains the largest cedars and plane trees to be found in the kingdom. He is most hospitable when at home, and one is generally sure of finding two or three well-known soldiers staying here.

HIS INTEREST IN TOMMY.

He has done much to better the lot of the private soldier. For years before the South African War he was hammering away at the War Office to do something to improve the sanitary arrangements for an army in camp and on the march, and so lessen the risk of enteric and other diseases. Better training of the men in matters of health and hygiene was a thing he urged upon the authorities almost without cessation. The War Office, however, turned the usual official deaf ear to all he had to say, and regarded him with mild amusement as one who had certainly got a bee in his bonnet. Then when came the days of Roberts's terrible march to Bloemfontein, when the men died off like flies from dysentery and enteric for want of proper training, the authorities rubbed their eyes in astonishment and told each other in tones of amazement that there really was something in what Methuen had so often told them after all. It throws an interesting sidelight upon his character that he refrained from making the obvious retort. Probably he thought all the more.

AN UNSEEN INFLUENCE.

Lord Methuen is popular in Society drawing-rooms—when he can be got there—but he spends comparatively little of his time in London. He is essentially an out-of-door man, and country life suits him much better than town. His influence in Army affairs to-day is much greater than is generally suspected, and the Duke of Connaught has the greatest faith in his judgment. He has a hand, directly or indirectly, in most of the important Army changes that take place, and this influence will be none the less because he is in South Africa. He has by no means reached the height of his military career yet. Indeed it is more than probable that before he finally retires from the Army he will stand at its head, and if peace continues while he holds that appointment, there is small doubt that he will be a success.

DOCKYARDS AND "DREADNOUGHTS."

A MATHEMATICAL PROBLEM.

By H. E. MARCHANT.

The competition in armaments between European countries is a subject that has been much discussed during the past few months, but one section of the whole question—and a most important one—viz., the available docking accommodation that exists for the large vessels now being and already constructed, seems to have been overlooked

During the past few months the air has been almost unpleasantly clouded with discussions ranging over various points connected with our naval and mercantile supremacy. Some of these aforesaid discussions have, no doubt, had elements of truth in them, but, with equally as little doubt, others have had only the vivid imagination of more or less interested persons to recommend them. Included in these discussions have been many dealing with the possible construction of docks round the coast, and the extension of those already in existence.

THE DEFICIENCY IN LARGE DOCKS.

It cannot be gainsaid that at present Great Britain is woefully deficient in large docks, owned or exclusively controlled by the Admiralty, and this statement is made in face of the fact that the extension of the Keyham portion of Devonport Dockyard has been opened comparatively recently. In taking this point into our consideration, it must be remembered that when this extension was commenced, international relations were such that it was necessary for this country to be represented by strong fleets in the Channel and the Mediterranean. In the whirlpool of European politics, however, the *entente cordiale* with France was established, with the result that the then disposition of our fleets was found to be uneconomical and faulty. Simultaneously it was found necessary to increase the strength of our naval representation on the East Coast, and by a fortunate coincidence we were able to devote the surplus ships of the Channel and Mediterranean fleets to this purpose.

THE EXISTING DOCKS.

At present our greatest strength in ships, both numerically and individually, is confined to the East Coast. But along the whole stretch of that part of Great Britain's seaboard there are only two docks capable of taking a "Dreadnought" or "Indomitable," and one of these is privately owned by Hawthorn, Leslie and Co., at Hebburn; the other is at Chatham. Should the ships of the Channel and Home Fleets require repairs at any time—and, of course, it is only in the nature of things that they will—the nearest available dockyard is Portsmouth, where there is only one "Dreadnought" dock. Steps are being taken to increase the accommodation there, it is true, but, like Rome, a large dock is not built in a day. There are two private docks at Southampton, over which, no doubt, the Admiralty have certain powers, but it is probable that in time of war they would be required for other purposes. We then come to Devonport, where there is room for three "Dreadnoughts," two in dry docks, and one in a lock, which, for a ship badly injured, is for all practical purposes useless. In the event of a naval battle, if the results of the sea-fights in the Russo-Japanese wars are to be taken into account, it is almost certain that those ships which are hit by the enemy's guns, but not sunk, will be very badly injured, with the result that all the docks—large and small—we now have, and more, could be easily filled.

To return for a moment to the East Coast. There are Chatham and Sheerness Dockyards, which cannot be extended owing to geographical difficulties, and in the north there is Rosyth, the bugbear of all naval critics—Parliamentary and otherwise—and a naval base in name only. The plans for its development have been hanging fire since the early days of the Selborne régime at the Admiralty, and although now and again questions in Parliament receive the usual official reply that it is not intended to abandon the site, the actual amount of work accomplished there is minute. Indeed, this is necessarily so, in consequence of the small sums that are allocated annually for an undertaking which, when it was contemplated, was to be colossal.

In addition to these facts, which are of a negligible quality, it is stated that the Admiralty propose to make Grimsby and Newcastle-on-Tyne bases for submarine and destroyer flotillas. While this does not help my contention that large docks are required on the East Coast, it may prove a doubtful honour for the two ports mentioned, inasmuch as in any such place the powers of the Admiralty stand in the way of the commercial development of the place, however small the nation's requirements are.

WHAT IS WANTED.

In the meantime, the Admiralty continues to build "Dreadnoughts" and "Indomitables" at such a rate that there are now six of the former type of vessel afloat, and by the time that all these, together with four "Indomitables," are ready for commissioning—which will be at the beginning of 1910—there will be only seven docks in the Kingdom, three of which are privately owned, which, by reason of the vessels' dimensions, they will be able to enter, and all but two of these are on the South Coast. Further than this, a seventh "Dreadnought" is to be laid down at Portsmouth shortly, and next year's Estimates will certainly allow for three more. Therefore, we are faced with the position that by the end of 1911, having regard to the present rate of shipbuilding, there will be ten "Dreadnoughts" alone afloat, to say nothing of the contemporary large cruisers.

WHAT MIGHT HAPPEN.

Let us suppose for a moment that the much-debated trouble with Germany came to a head and there was a naval battle in the North Sea. We could not hope for the Channel Fleet—which is composed of vessels of the "King Edward VII." and preceding classes—to come out of such an engagement unscathed; and there can be equally as little doubt that the docking resources of Chatham and Sheerness would be taxed to their utmost, even if they should prove at all adequate. Now, the Channel Fleet would have as its immediate support the Nore Division of the Home Fleet. In the event of one "Dreadnought" and one "Indomitable" being injured, they would be taken to Chatham and Hebburn—if the dock at the latter place was available. But if more than one of these vessels were damaged, they would have to go on to Portsmouth and Southampton, the same proviso applying to the latter port as to Hebburn. After that Devonport's two docks would be used. In this case, and if circumstances were so far favourable that the fight took place in the southern portion of the North Sea, the damaged vessel, or vessels, would have to face a voyage of 100 or 200 miles, whichever dockyard they made for, under much reduced speed, and hampered by the enemy's ships. But if, as is more likely to be the case, the fight were to take place off the Yorkshire coast, another 200 miles would have to be added to the "lame duck's" voyage. This point emphasises the importance of a naval base on the North-East Coast, and also the tactical disadvantage we are at in the present arrangement of dockyards.

The position as indicated points to the urgent need for a number of floating docks. The possibilities of such havens of refuge have not received in this country the attention that their merits deserve. If they did nothing else, they would serve as useful stop-gaps in time of trouble, and, as I have pointed out, the Admiralty might be forced to use the one at Hebburn. So far that body possess only one, and with this they seem to have emulated the example of the Circumlocution Office, in "Little Dorrit," by trying how not to do the proper thing. The one example that the Admiralty possess has been banished to Bermuda, where, with the exception of being used by the battleship "Dominion," after she had grounded in the St. Lawrence river, it will probably rot for want of employment.

America has realised the advantages of floating docks as transportable repairing bases, and is building several of them. Their great feature is that they can be quite easily towed to any particular spot, and in the many harbours round the coast a battleship or cruiser could be repaired expeditiously, and without the necessity of employing divers on the injuries below the water-line.

Pembroke and Haulbowline yards have not been considered in this article, because they suffer, like Chatham and Sheerness, in not being capable of extension, and strategically, of course, they are in a worse position than Portsmouth or Devonport. From time to time the claims of Dover to be considered as a naval base are discussed, but beyond the anchorage, there is nothing to recommend that port.

So much for the naval aspect of the case. But this shortage of large Admiralty docks would affect the very vitals of the merchant service in the event of an outbreak of war. The large liners, whose proprietary companies are subsidised by the Admiralty, would then have to fulfil the duties of auxiliary cruisers, in accordance with the Admiralty contract with their owners.

So we arrive at the root of the trouble. On the East Coast there are two docks, at Portsmouth one, and at Devonport two—five in all. Against this number we have to balance the fact that by the end of 1911 we shall have ten "Dreadnoughts" alone, and possibly the same number of large cruisers. And however much you turn and twist these figures about, 20 ships will not go into five docks. Q.E.D.

FAITH.

By J. G. Grant.

Ping-Pong may come, and Diabolo may go, but that popular game known as the Confidence Trick, in various guises, goes on for ever.

Within a hundred yards of Oxford Circus there may be seen daily several lots of sandwichmen whose boards proclaim to the world the names of certain wonderful persons. They are: (1) The Only Egyptian Palmist, Professor ——, Palmist, Clairvoyant, and Crystal Gazer, No. —, Oxford Street; (2) ——, the Greatest Living Scientific Palmiste, No. —, Oxford Street; (3) Miss ——, Palmiste and Clairvoyant, No. —, Regent Street; and (4) ——, the Well-known Palmist, No. —, Regent Street.

Within five minutes' walk of Oxford Circus, videlicet, in Bond Street, there are (1) an Astral Palmist, (2) a Clairvoyant, Palmist, and Crystal Gazer, (3) an Intuitive and Scientific Palmist, and (4) a Palmist.

Considering the streets in which these eight professors carry on their business, it is evident that they pay very large rents. How do they do it?

In every magazine under the sun the patent medicine man advertises, and pays handsomely for doing so, and yet manages to make a fortune. From statistics which are given in the report of the Commissioners of Inland Revenue just published, it appears that during the last financial year the sales of patent medicines were the largest ever recorded. The duty paid on these articles amounted to no less than £334,142, which represents a value of something like two and a half million pounds sterling. Calculated on this basis, 53,000,000 bottles, or cases of medicine of the retail value of 1s. were sold, the duty on each being 1½d. And not very long ago we were told in a court of law that a certain manufacturer of a certain pill contrived to make an income exactly equal to the combined stipends of sixteen Prime Ministers. How does he do it?

In a certain newspaper there was propounded to us some time ago by some very artful scribe a seemingly very artless conundrum—Do we believe? Angels and ministers of grace, what a question! Did its cunning propounder never hear of that hoary deception already mentioned—the confidence trick—which has been worked off times without number, and still continues to be worked off daily on the people of this great nation? Does he not know that we eagerly read the prophets of the race-course every day (although we, however, do not pay much attention to those of the Old Testament)? Has he never seen the rush for shares when the prospectus of the New Borrioboola Gha Gold Mining Company is issued? Do we believe! We do. We believe anything. We believe everything. It is, in short, the Age of Belief. And that is the reason why the patent pill and the panacea meet us at every turn. From which it follows that a vast proportion of the human race are suffering from innumerable diseases—or think they are. And why? Because the patent medicine man tells them (in print) that they are; and they *believe*. And the result is that, notwithstanding vaccination and new drains, notwithstanding the Royal and every other College of Surgeons and eke Physicians; notwithstanding everything, in fact, the patent medicine man flourishes like the green bay tree.

It may not be uninteresting to take a look at one or two of the Medicine Man's advertisements of his "cures." It is an invariable rule with these alleviators of human suffering that the very first dose has an appreciable effect on the interior economy; but there is one well-known nostrum which must be exceptionally potent, for in the usual testimonial written by a lady who suffered from indigestion to such an extent that she frequently had a "burning sensation in the chest," we read that immediately after the first dose she experienced a "pleasant sensation in the stomach." The scoffer will, of course, smile and proceed to explain this "pleasant sensation." Be that as it may, physiologists will be interested to learn that by the swallowing of a pill the seat of a "sensation" can be immediately transferred from one part of the human anatomy to another.

Considering the vast number of patent medicines, it might be thought that there would be a cure for every human ill. But such is not the case. Far from it. There are sundry diseases for which, up to the present, there is no remedy; such diseases, for example, as expectorating in public, eating peas with a knife (also in public), making speeches, borrowing books, playing golf, murder, and sudden death. But for all diseases of the liver, lights, kidneys, skin, blood, bones and brain (if any), one cannot do better than take Snook's Nervous Compound or Crook's Sanguinary Mixture.

WHAT IS YOUR NUMBER?
See Page iii. of Cover.

A LONDON CLERK

Nervous Despondency, Neuralgia, Loss of Appetite, Low Vitality—

From all over the world the innumerable appreciations, which are so often published in these columns, make it plain to anyone that the wonderful cures achieved by Phosferine, are accomplished *under ordinary conditions*. No special food, no change of air, no stoppage of work required, but just regular doses of Phosferine *while the usual occupation is continued!* The immediate and immense gain, the *permanent* benefit, derived from the revitalizing powers of Phosferine is well illustrated by the graphic letter from Mr. A. Wilson, a London clerk.

Cured at first attempt.

Mr. A. Wilson, 27, Bowman's Buildings, Edgware Road, writes:—"At one time I used to smile at the idea of becoming a victim to that complaint 'nerves,' which seems so much a part of present day life. Hard and incessant clerical work, and probably cigarette smoking were the primary cause, living perhaps with the nerves at too great a tension, at any rate the condition I got into was lamentable. It made me utterly wretched and miserable, and re-acted on those about me. The least thing worried and irritated me beyond reason, and I felt incapable of undertaking the least simple task, and had neither energy nor initiative, neither tact nor decision, little difficulties seemed insurmountable, the brain seemed clouded, and I lost all confidence in myself and interest in life. Neuralgia I had badly, agonising, terrible pain, that seemed to sap the little strength that remained, and left me despondent. A friend advised me to try Phosferine, I had tried so many things that it was only half-heartedly I obtained a supply and took a few doses. It quickly relieved the pain and restored my appetite, which had become a thing of remembrance, and made me feel brighter and more like my old self. Now I feel better and more fit than I have ever been in my life."—October 27, 1908.

PHOSFERINE

THE GREATEST OF ALL TONICS.

A PROVEN REMEDY FOR

Neuralgia	Indigestion	Maternity Weakness
Rheumatism	Premature Decay	Sleeplessness
Brain-fag	Nervous Headaches	Anæmia
Influenza	Quinsy	Malaria

and all disorders consequent upon a reduced state of the nervous system.

The Remedy of Kings.

Phosferine has been supplied by Royal Commands

To the Royal Family
H.I.M. the Empress of Russia | H.M. the King of Greece
H.M. the Queen of Roumania | H.I.M. the Dowager Empress of Russia
The Imperial Family of China

And the Principal Royalty and Aristocracy throughout the World.

PHOSFERINE RE-CREATES THE NERVE FORCES.

Bottles, 1/1½, 2/9, and 4/6. Sold by all Chemists, Stores, &c.
The 2/9 size contains nearly four times the 1/1½ size.

IMPROVE THE BREED!

A SUGGESTED REMEDY FOR UNEMPLOYMENT.

By Dick Wander.

You need a remedy for unemployment? You admit the case is a desperate one? Ah! then the remedy, too, must be desperate. Let me prescribe. But I warn you the prescription will be a plain, blunt one; to many, most offensive, so I make no apology for writing it with vulgar directness. Here it is: Improve the breed! "What an indelicate suggestion!" exclaims the horrified Smuggins, with a roll of his pious eyes; and he proceeds to urge upon his colleagues on the Muddlesex County Council the necessity of at once establishing relief stations and other penny boxes of trashy ointment with which to anoint the hideous ulcer. He and his blundering brethren will go on applying quack salves—which, after soothing the parts, and allaying the irritation for a time, make the pain more intolerable than before—until the ugly sore of unemployment spreads nearly all over the body of the unfortunate worker.

Somebody has said that a great many of the unemployed are "unemployable" Quite so! That is mostly by reason of physical unfitness. A great many more, though employable, are incapable. Let me illustrate.

Bill Smith is a navvy, a big, raw-boned fellow, strong as a bullock, a veritable glutton for work. He'll show some on 'em 'ow ter use a blankety shovel when he does get a start; he's a navvy, Bill is, none o' yer 'arf men. Unfortunately, poor Bill cannot get a start; and, lacking the gumption to attempt anything out of his own line, he and his missus and kids starve. He is an incapable.

Percy Penpusher is a reliable French and German correspondent, and an accurate bookkeeper, but he has to make way for his chum's sister—who is going to do the job at half Percy's wages—and finds himself unemployed. Poor Percy! He is of slight build and consumptive tendencies; his delicate constitution prevents him from seeking employment where manual labour is required; he is highly nervous, and possesses, too, little confidence in himself to attempt anything other than that to which he has been accustomed. So, like Bill Smith, he starves. Percy, too, is incapable.

Either of these two men could more than hold his own in his own particular groove; out of it they are both helplessly incapable—Bill mentally, Percy physically.

Now look at this unemployed procession which is marching towards us, the advance guards pushing their collection boxes in our faces. Watch them closely. Most of them are pale, narrow-chested, undersized—physically unfit. But strong, broad-shouldered fellows, with ruddy faces that tell of an open-air life, are there also. We can see at a glance why the first are in the ranks of this procession; the majority of them couldn't do a hard day's work if it were offered them. So we will call a few of the latter aside and talk to them; surely fine, healthy fellows like these ought not to be here.

They tell us that they had board school educations, passed the sixth standard, and so on; but they don't remember one bit of what they were taught. They can read enough to find the winner of to-morrow's big 'un—though when the result comes up it is generally one they fancied all along, but got stalled off of at the last moment. And they know sufficient arithmetic to enable them to accurately total up their 1, 2, 3 accumulators, when they draw their infrequent winnings off Barney Benjamin, the bookie. (In passing, let me explain that I am not tilting at the working man who backs his fancy when he can afford to do so. I would rather see a man hand his "bob" to a bookie than spend it in four-ale. In the latter case, it is irretrievably lost; if he backs a "gee" he has a chance, even if it is a remote one, of getting it back with interest. I am fond of a glass of ale, and I like an occasional "flutter," and I see no harm in moderate indulgence in either. I, however, have never tried to make money by backing horses. Only clever professionals are able to do this. I have never imagined it possible for both bookie and backer to win at the same game, and as the "books" make a darned good living out of it, well——?)

Let us continue our talk with our unemployed friends. We sound them on one or two topical questions. They take little or no interest. We discover them to be incapable of thinking for themselves. Some read the *Daily Mail* every morning, and loudly proclaim themselves followers of "Good old Joe." Others read the *Leader*, and won't have their grub taxed. Their politics are those of the paper they read, but do not understand. They will not admit that there can be two sides to any question. There is one, and one only; that which their favourite paper advocates.

Now, listen! Bill Smith, the thick-headed giant, Percy Penpusher, the clever consumptive clerk, the under-sized weaklings, and the brawny dunces of the procession, are all allowed to marry without restriction, and people the earth with offspring inheriting their deplorable physical and mental failings. Probe into the pedigree of these incapables, and you will assuredly find that the poor fellows are bearing burdens imposed upon them by unfit ancestors.

You wouldn't expect a ewe-necked, goose-rumped, weak-backed stallion, without a drop of thoroughbred blood in his veins, to beget a Derby winner, would you? Of course not. You wouldn't mate him with the sorriest plating mare. A cattle-breeder, a sheep farmer, a pig-keeper, or a poultry-raiser—not one of them would dream of allowing their stock to breed haphazard. Why, then, should the human be allowed to sow the seeds of disease and ignorance when and where he chooses?

"Like begets like," there is no doubt of that; if not in the first, in succeeding generations, and many will agree with me that physically fit parents are absolutely necessary if we are to have healthy children. That, they argue, however, is sufficient. Education will impart to the healthy child that mental alertness without which in these days the strongest must go to the wall. Will it? Then why hasn't it done so in the case of Bill Smith and the healthy chaps of the procession? Because it is impossible to instil knowledge into the head of a child without brains. Look at numbers of our 'Varsity men upon whose education fortunes have been spent. You will find many of them to-day in Rowton Houses, and such-like places, like the rest of the physical and mental weaklings, grovelling under burdens handed down to them by their forefathers.

A couple contemplating marriage should undergo a compulsory examination as to their fitness; physique and intelligence should both be tested. Certificates should be granted, and it should be made a criminal offence for persons not possessing them to beget or bear children in or out of wedlock.

Slowly but surely degeneracy would disappear almost entirely. A healthy, intelligent race would arise, and education, instead of being the ghastly failure it is to-day, would become of real benefit to the community. People would think for themselves, and when they at last do this, let the noble land tyrant and the smug Church dignitary look out for themselves. They have always been the workers' worst enemies, and, depend upon it, they would be given short shrift. Instead of attributing unemployment to Free Trade, over-production, machinery, aliens, and the rest of the numberless parrot cries now heard throughout the land, the thinking workers would discover that none of these are the real cause. There is, and will always be, plenty of the good things of life for everybody; the trouble is that they are in the hands of the few instead of the many. Archbishops and the rest of the clergy would not then be paid enormous stipends for the stuffing of obsolete dogmas down unwilling throats. Men would be paid according to their abilities. I am not one of those who believe it possible for all men to be on the same level; we shall always have our strong men and our weaklings. What we have to do is to see that the latter are as few as possible, and not, as at present, constituting the majority of the population. The accumulation of huge fortunes at the expense of the worker would be prevented by a graduated tax on incomes, and the millionaire would be relegated to that obscurity to which he rightly belongs.

No amount of tinkering and patching up by Governments, or municipal authorities, philanthropists, or parsons will solve this great problem of unemployment. The evil will never be cured except by those who are affected by it. The workers must effect their own salvation. This they will do only when they think for themselves, and until the breed is improved they are incapable of thinking.

The worker must swallow this drastic purge, cleanse his system, and that great, big, nasty sore of unemployment will heal of its own accord. Improve the breed, raise up a race of thinking men and women, and the millennium is almost within sight.

AMONG THE BOOKS.

By Herbert Vivian.

I have now received what are, happily, the last two volumes of O. Wilde's unnecessarily collected writings. One of them is a reprint of the reviews of long-forgotten books which he contributed to ephemeral publications. His value as a critic may be gauged by the grotesque assertion that his impossible friend Pater united "personality with perfection." He also considers one of Edna Lyall's feeble novels "a very charming book," containing "an exquisite creation." In his opinion it was "a novel with a high purpose and a noble meaning . . . never dull." It is not necessary to wade very far in order to discover that Wilde was a feeble critic with no sense of proportion, no sense of shame. The other volume, entitled "Miscellanies," includes even trivial impertinences like his notes to Mr. Whistler, though without the castigations which they inspired. This is the kind of thing:

> (*World*, November 24, 1886.) Atlas,—This is very sad! With our James vulgarity begins at home, and should be allowed to stay there.—A vous, Oscar Wilde.

Both volumes reveal the author's slipshod style, which must always exclude him from the higher or even the middle domains of literature.

"**Orthodoxy,**" by Gilbert K. Chesterton (Lane: 6s.), is a mass of incoherent verbiage. The author says: "The only possible excuse for this book is that it is an answer to a challenge." It appears that another nonentity named Street observed: "I will begin to worry about my philosophy when Mr. Chesterton has given us his." Unfortunately, Mr. Chesterton has no philosophy, but he has snatched the opportunity to provide collectors of waste-paper with nearly 300 pages of drivel. He has sinned with his eyes open, for he frankly admits that he does not see how the book can avoid being dull. The man does not even write intelligible English.

"**Arnoul the Englishman,**" by Francis Aveling (Methuen: 6s.), is excellently written, and will appeal to those who are able to carry their thoughts so far back as the thirteenth century. The author has avoided the pedantry which we find too often in historical romances, laboriously compiled in libraries.

"**Finn the Wolfhound,**" by A. J. Dawson (Richards: 6s net), is the biography of a delightful dog, whose character and adventures are made much more interesting than those of the ordinary heroes of fiction. Mr. Dawson writes with knowledge and sympathy, and his book should appeal to every lover of a good dog.

I do not agree with Mr. Esme C. Wingfield-Stratford that "the Poetry of a nation is the measure of its harmony with the Eternal, and when, as in modern England, it becomes a despised, and nearly an extinct, art, we may know with absolute certainty that decay is eating into that nation's soul," but I admit that too many of us are indifferent to the pleasing relaxation of turning over a book of verse such as his "**Call of Dawn and other Poems**" (Lane: 5s. net). He possesses gifts of vigour and melody, and displays his originality by deifying the Devil and Oliver Cromwell and Oscar Wilde. With regard to the latter, there is evident irony in the apostrophe to his "murderers" and the suggestion that "he is not dead," because "beauty never dies." Beauty! The diagnosis of Cromwell's character is, however, by no means bad.

"**Cousin Cinderella,**" by Mrs. Everard Cotes (Methuen: 6s.), does not mark an advance on the author's previous work. In spite of occasional flashes, the final impression is that the book has been spun out with much painful effort.

"**Mary of England,**" by N. Thorpe Mayne (Griffiths: 3s 6d. net), is a blank verse tragedy which no manager has consented to stage. The roughness of the lines does not afford very pleasant reading, but I should not be surprised if the play made a hit, for it possesses many dramatic situations, and appeals strongly to Protestant prejudices.

"**Le Guide du Gourmet à Table,**" by A Practical Maitre d'Hôtel (Simpkin, Marshall, 5s. net), is an excellent little summary of the whole art of gastronomy, and will teach anyone who possesses a little common sense to produce all the best French dishes with the smallest possible expenditure of trouble. The only fault I have to find with it is that the translation has been restricted to the preface and part of the title page. If the whole book were rendered into English it would be invaluable even to plain cooks, who might then hope to remain no longer plain. Meanwhile, many of us will be grateful for the information that milk punch is the thing to drink with turtle soup.

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BEHIND THE WALLS OF A PRIVATE ASYLUM.

By Dr. Forbes Winslow.

We have received the following from Dr. Forbes Winslow :—

"The publicity given by you in your columns to the case of Miss Fawcett, confined as 'a person of unsound mind,' at Fiddington Asylum, near Devizes, must necessarily draw serious attention to the deprivation of liberty in similar institutions. I was consulted about her case in the ordinary routine of my profession, and at the time explained fully to her friends the difficulties which would be placed in my way of gaining an interview with the lady. This has proved to be the case. I made application to the doctor in charge; I knew this was a mere farce, and that I should be referred to other persons for permission. My anticipations were justified. I know nothing of the mental condition of Miss Fawcett, apart from what I have been lately shown; letters of those who, being in daily communication with her, one and all testify to her unfitness to be detained as a lunatic in a private asylum. It is not to me so much a question whether she is actually a responsible person in the proper legal interpretation of that term, but whether her mental condition is such as to warrant her being detained among lunatics. In other words, cannot she be managed outside the walls of an asylum, and be in the enjoyment of her freedom under kind and judicious supervision and away from the continuous association with chronic lunatics? This, to my mind, is the question at issue. I have no hesitation in stating that at the present day there are among those incarcerated in asylums quite half the number who could be well managed outside. I have proved this on many occasions. I have in many instances been the means of obtaining the freedom from asylum supervision of those who, apparently, had there been no intervention, would have been there for their natural lives. I do not recollect one single case where the steps taken were not followed by anything but good results. I have not the least hesitation in saying that the very atmosphere of a lunatic asylum, and the contaminated air breathed, are sufficient to prevent recovery. Many a case, curable in its nature, has become chronic by being placed among lunatics.

"The first night in a lunatic asylum, after the kind and cordial reception by the proprietor on the arrival, is terrible in the extreme. But much more awful is the dreadful awakening on the following morning. The patient finds she has been deceived by her relatives and by others. This delightful 'haven of rest' is a lunatic asylum surrounded by all that is appalling and heartrending. Many persons are condemned to a life-long imprisonment and misery in these places. Once in there, we say with Dante, 'Despair of hope all ye who enter here.' I ask in the name of Justice why should private asylums be nothing more or less than mercenary speculations, why should the licencees, in many instances, be lay individuals without the slightest claim to a knowledge of the treatment of mental diseases? They have been pitch-forked into being a proprietor of a private asylum from the fact that they have bought the licence from perhaps the wife of a deceased doctor, who formerly held the licence. I fail to differentiate the position of a lay proprietor of a private lunatic asylum making his thousands per annum, and the proprietor of a prosperous hotel. They are in both instances money-making schemes. The difference in the inmates is, however, great, but the pecuniary desires are the same. I ask in the interest of the British public why should such a state of affairs be permitted in England? Why should it be in the power of interested persons to prevent any friend or medical man appointed by that friend from visiting the alleged lunatic?

"Private asylums should cease to exist or should be all taken over by the State forthwith. Much of the red-tapeism existing should be done away with. They should be properly inspected, and those who are able to be cared for outside should be at once liberated from their enthraldom. A medical man is asked to visit a patient confined in a private asylum. The usual response is as follows, by the person in charge, to the effect that there is no occasion for such interference, that the patient will probably get worse from the visit. This is not correct in most instances, and that no visit can be made unless permission is obtained from the person on whose reception order the patient was admitted, and in whose interest in most cases it is to allow no outside interference is notorious. I say that when once a person who is paying a good sum for 'medical care and maintenance' becomes an inmate of a private asylum, that should there be the least sign of mental disorder existing it is a most difficult thing to obtain a discharge under proper supervision outside with a view to giving the person a chance, and also it is, I was going to say, an absolute impossibility to obtain permission for a medical man to visit such person and give his frank, honest and unbiassed opinion as to the possibility of giving the patient a change of scene, disassociated from the company of lunatics, and the other horrors incidental to life in a private asylum."

And this from a friend of the family, Mrs. Quincey Roberts, of Walham, Park Hill, Bickley :—

> My close friendship with Miss Lilian Fawcett's family goes back for upwards of forty years, and I am glad to be able to testify to the existence of relatives and friends who feel the tenderest affection and regard for her.
>
> About five years ago—not fourteen—some distressing symptoms rendered it necessary, on excellent expert advice, to place her in the retreat where she now resides. She is visited there by relatives and friends, who never leave her without feelings of thankfulness and gratitude that such places exist for persons in her condition, where everything that kindness and skill can do is done to make her life a happy one.
>
> Her excellent lawyers are old and tried friends of the family, and were trusted friends of her late parents.
>
> On the part of the relatives, friends, lawyers, doctors, nurses, and all who surround my dear young friend, allow me to assure you that she receives every care and attention that can possibly be prompted by affection, wisdom, and skill.

If so, and if Miss Fawcett's relatives are so concerned with her comfort and happiness, why do they oppose a visit from her old friend Miss Barker, and object to the professional visit of Dr. Forbes Winslow?

A WORD TO CHATHAM.

Much might be said to justify the strong language which has been recently used by the Chatham and district jobmasters to describe their sense of the unfairness of the local Watch Committee in driving their 'buses off the stretch between Chatham Town Hall and the Old Gun Inn at Strood. For a long time 'buses have been running between these two points, a distance of about two miles, for a penny fare. This appears to have interfered more or less with the takings of the Tramway Company, who have apparently influenced the Rochester Corporation to utilise the opportunity afforded them by the construction of the tramway through High Street to force the 'buses from a profitable run into unremunerative side streets. In a word, the Watch Committee has declined to renew the licences for the 'buses except on the condition that they do not use the new tram route along the High Street. This virtually establishes a monopoly for the Tramway Company, and establishes it, too, in a way which operates unjustly against the jobmasters, and inconveniently against such of the public as are unable to find accommodation in the cars. We believe in fair competition; and for the Rochester Corporation to rob Peter to pay Paul, to empty privately-owned 'buses in order to fill privately-owned tramways, is not fair at all.

CLEETHORPES CHADBANDS.

Cleethorpes may be said to be in the pocket of the Great Central Railway. The promenade, the Pier Gardens, the pier, and the property along the front are all owned by the Company, who run their line into the town. In a word, Cleethorpes depends almost wholly for subsistence on the number of excursions run into it. Practically the excursions upon which the shopkeepers rely are run on Saturday, Sunday and Monday, and more are run on Sunday than on any other day in the week. Yet the local Council instruct the police to summons all shopkeepers who remain open on Sunday, under the Act of Charles II.; "whose word no man relied on, who never said a foolish thing and never did a wise one." The result is that every shopkeeper who remains open on Sundays has to pay a mulct of 10s. 6d. If the shops closed, the excursionists who enter the town on Sundays and want something to eat, something to smoke, a memento of their visit, and so on, would have no means of satisfying their needs except by recourse to the public-houses, which are not at all troubled by the ghost of the giddy monarch. Not only are the Sunday openers fined as above stated, but they must personally appear at the county police court, a distance of three miles from the town, and there wait an hour or two before they receive attention. The whole business seems singularly absurd for a place like Cleethorpes. If the shopkeepers have the townsfolk behind them, the best thing they can do is to clear out the present Council and elect another less enamoured of the blessed memory of Charles II.

CONFESSIONS OF A FAMOUS MEDIUM.—VI.

STORY OF THE GREAT "SCIENTIFIC" HOAX.

The Master Key.

By DOUGLAS BLACKBURN.

I forget whether the credit, or otherwise, of the invention of the ingenious code used in the great third experiment belongs to S. or to me. Probably it was a composite arrangement. Anyhow it has since done service in bewildering thousands of the patrons of clairvoyant entertainments, besides converting scientific observers of the S.P.R.

S. and I had long given up the contact system of getting into psychic rapport, and gladly and willingly acquiesced in any suggestion that we should not be within sight of each other during an experiment. But, as already explained, there were limits to the distance at which we could communicate, and as we were nearing the end of our programme, having thoroughly convinced Messrs. Myers and Gurney of the reality of telepathy, my idea was to ring the curtain down on a grand finale and retire on my laurels.

The difficulty was how to bring off our coup at the rooms of the Society in Dean's Yard. As the experiment required the assistance of a secret confederate, its carrying into practice was obviously very difficult on strange ground. We waited, however, buoyed up by that faith in something turning up which had been so fully justified on more than one occasion. It is marvellous to what extent a person on the lookout can make opportunity his servant.

I had rehearsed the great coup at Brighton, and had it in good working order waiting for the opportunity to produce it under the joint management of S. and myself, when accident precipitated matters.

My meeting with Messrs. Myers, Gurney, and Leaf at Brighton was quite accidental. They were calling on S. to show Leaf some hypnotic experiments. I casually mentioned that I had got a hypnotic subject into a receptive stage, and knowing they were keen on this phase of thought transference at a distance they promptly accepted my invitation to call at my rooms after lunch.

I hurried round and got my confederates. They were the lad Murphy, a telegraph messenger, and a young fellow who was a sort of learner, or something of that kind, at the Brighton telegraph office. My house was at the angle of Wellington Road, and the back garden of the first house in that road was in full view of the bay window of my front drawing-room. In that garden was my telegraph operator, ostensibly engaged in making a box or packing case, the tap, tap of his hammer being mildly audible in my rooms. It was arranged that the knocking should be going on before and at the time of the arrival of the investigators, because had it only begun with the experiment suspicion might have been aroused, though experience had long satisfied me that the scientific investigator almost invariably fixes his suspicion on some innocent detail. By making a show of trying to protect this point the conjuror confirms this suspicion, and keeps the attention of the watcher upon it, thus leaving free from observation the real secret.

I remember once at Dean's Yard accidentally pulling out with my handkerchief a spool of coloured silk which I was conveying to a lady friend. It was furtively confiscated by one of the watchers, and later a whole committee of investigators sat upon it in order to discover its relation to psychic force.

The hammer taps were of two kinds, scarcely noticeable to the casual observer, but distinct enough to those who had been taught how to distinguish them. One was a dull thud, and was merely a blind; the other a sharper, clearer sound, produced by striking the more solid parts of the box. These sharp taps were what Murphy, asleep in the upper room, had to listen for. I had devised a series of numbers for each letter of the alphabet. We all understood the Morse code, but were afraid that the distinction between dots and dashes might sound suspicious. Therefore a letter had to be signalled slowly by hammer taps of the same duration, the dull taps indicating the punctuation.

When the word was given me, I, standing by the bay window in sight of the box maker, signalled the number of the first letter by an agreed code of passes, or arm thrusts, by which I conveyed the psychic force to Murphy. He transmitted the letter by hammer taps, and so the word was slowly but surely sent upstairs.

THE DIFFICULTY OF DETECTION.

When the secret of any trick is revealed the tendency of most people is to express astonishment that it should deceive. They overlook the very important circumstance of unpreparedness on the part of the victims. The chances of protecting against fraud in pretended psychic experiments are extremely remote for the all-sufficient reason that the tricksters have absolute control of the conditions. They say in effect, "If you will permit us to perform this trick in our own way we shall fulfil our promise by producing something startling." If the investigators object, then the reasonable retort is, "We do not profess to do this thing under any other conditions than our own."

It is safe to assume that the psychic sensitive who undertakes to produce certain phenomena under certain conditions will succeed. Like the man who makes a catch bet, he knows that he cannot lose if the terms of the bet are observed, for he has made them to suit himself.

HOW SIR J. CRICHTON BROWNE MISSED A CATCH.

The only scientific observer who refused to be taken in by S. and I was Sir James Crichton Browne. He witnessed some of our experiments at Dean's Yard, and expressed himself rather strongly.

The interesting circumstance in this matter was that Sir James actually discovered nothing, but was prompted to denounce the business on suspicion only. As a matter of fact, S. and I realised as soon as we saw Sir James that he would be one too many for us, for as we put it, he was very antipathetic, and it is an axiom of all psychic phenomena that the presence of an antagonistic or sceptical person completely upsets the essential conditions. Sir James showed his hand too soon, or I am fairly satisfied that he would have caught us out. Thanks to the warning conveyed by his hostile preliminary observations, we were put on our guard, and did not try to produce miracles, therefore he was deprived of an opportunity for nipping in the bud a plant which has expanded into a very large tree. I would take this opportunity of warning would-be exposers of psychic humbug that they make a great mistake in adopting an antagonistic and sceptical attitude. They frighten off the game. The best evidence of the truth of this lies in the extraordinary rarity of successful exposure. As in the case of Sir James, there is nothing to expose, for the reason that the performers are not playing out the hand.

Unquestionably the tremendous hold that telepathy and its cognate branches of "enquiry" has taken on intelligent people is largely explained by the circumstances I have endeavoured to emphasise, namely, that the player has absolute control of the game, as he makes the rules.

THE RESERVIST AND REGIMENTAL INSTITUTES.

Our attention has been directed to what appears to be a very serious grievance on the part of Reservists who are in charge of what are known as "wet canteens," *i.e.*, beer-bars which supply beer and spirits to soldiers.

A man leaving the Service with a "very good" character is, we will say, placed in charge of one of these bars. He is informed on starting that the company or firm employing him expects a profit of 10 per cent., or thereabouts, on the sale of malt liquors. There would be nothing unreasonable in this if the liquors were supplied to him at the wholesale price, but, as a matter of fact, they are issued to him at actual retail prices, namely, mild ale at 1s. per gallon; bitter ale at 1s. 4d. per gallon, to be retailed at 1½d. and 2d. per pint respectively. These prices leave no margin for profit. If, then, the canteen-keeper is to secure the 10 per cent. required by his employer, he can only do it in one of two ways: either by adulterating, or short measure. If he fails to make the percentage expected, he is discharged as being unfitted for his position, and in some cases loses his previous "good character." If, on the other hand, he satisfies his employers as regards profits, and is himself reported by one of the men he is serving to the regimental authorities for giving short measure, he invariably gets discharged.

One correspondent cites his own experience. Whilst serving in the wet canteen of a brigade stationed at Emshott, he was not only expected to realise 10 per cent. on the sale of malt liquors, but also on the sale of dry goods, there being no possible opportunity of making ½d. profit on the latter, as the following prices will show:—Cigarettes (Woodbines), issued to the bar at 4s. 2d. per box of 20 packets; tobaccos (Coolie, Irish roll, shag, and so on), at 4s. per pound. These are the actual retail prices. Our correspondent was reported for not filling a pint, and upon its being proved he was dismissed. But surely men ought not to be required to make a profit for their employers of 10 per cent., or any other percentage, when it is impossible for them to do so at the prices at which they get the goods and are expected to sell them, unless they adulterate or give short measure. When the wet canteens were run under the direct supervision of brewers this extortionate percentage was not expected, although the waiters were paid a far higher rate of wage than they are at present. If the brewers were contented with the smaller percentage, why are not the grocers who now have the monopoly?

OPEN LETTERS, POST-CARDS, AND TELEGRAMS.

To the County Magistrates, Grimsby.

GENTLEMEN,—Just a line or two to inform that I note with satisfaction a more humane spirit at work among you since I last addressed you in grave admonition. It is a great pleasure to me to acknowledge what I may call the judicial kindness with which you treated the two unemployed seamen who had gone to Grimsby in search of a job, who had failed to find one, who were without money, without shelter, and without food, and were found at Habrough asleep in an unoccupied building. Not only did you discharge them, but you gave them five shillings each to help them on their way. If you had similarly treated that Leicester labourer whom you sent to prison for a month in almost identical circumstances, my other letter would have remained unwritten.

But, gentlemen, though my criticism of your action was severe and plainspoken, you will acknowledge that it has fulfilled its purpose. I am sure you now see, if never before, that it is often almost impossible to be just unless one is merciful; that, in fact, the only real justice is mercy. In other cases, to balance the offence and the punishment is at once the most delicate and the most responsible function of magistracy. Undoubtedly magistrates often go wrong from incapacity rather than from intention to be harsh or vindictive. They have not the sense of judicial perspective, and see things in disproportionate relation; or they have not the judicial temperament, and judge things less on the facts and circumstances proved, than by personal feeling and prejudice. Gentlemen, we badly want a model bench of Justices of the Peace in this country. JOHN BULL.

To his Highness the Jam Sahib of Nawanagar (otherwise Ranji), India.

DEAR RANJI,—News to hand that you are engaged to marry an Indian princess, and if you make as good a husband as you are a cricketer the lady will have a treat. You are a light-hearted, happy-go-lucky, and, if I may say so without offence, rather an absent-minded young man, who has left a lot of little things, in the way of unpaid accounts, behind you. But, on the whole, you are not a bad sort, and I wish you joy of your choice, and your choice joy of you. Present on my behalf the season's greetings to your *fiancée*.

JOHN BULL.

To the Education Committee, Beckenham.

GENTLEMEN,—Carried out in a decent and cleanly way, the medical inspection of school children is not open to any reasonable objection. On the contrary, it is a regulation in the best interests of both children and parents. But it seems that at a recent inspection in one of your schools children were stripped quite nude, and subjected to a rough, disgusting, and uncleanly examination as to which I need not repeat the details.

Parents in the neighbourhood bitterly complain, with the gravest reason, of the filthy thoroughness of this medical inspection. Some of the girls attending school are said to be fourteen years of age, and it would, I think, be difficult to put too strongly the objections to so gross an outrage, however well-intentioned it may be. I shall hope to hear that the methods of medical examination in your schools have been modified into cleanness and decency under instructions from the Education Board. JOHN BULL.

To the Rev. L. T. Dodd, Vicar of Acocks Green, Birmingham.

CELESTIAL SIR,—You have attracted my attention by having refused to grant the use of the new mission hall, built by voluntary public subscriptions, for a dinner to be given by a local musical society to 200 poor children, unless you are paid a fee of two guineas. As, in the circumstances of the philanthropy, the society did not feel justified in paying this clerical exaction, the committee of the Acocks Green Institute were asked to lend their hall for the purpose, and it is a scathing comment on your action that they granted the application without demur. Not only did you refuse the use of the mission hall, but you gave reasons for your refusal. "I don't want a lot of kids knocking about my new room," you said.

Now, my holy friend, it does not appear to me that this sort of thing is either good Christianity or good fellowship. Here were a number of poor kiddies to be assembled at a dinner through the charitable contributions of many kindly people in the neighbourhood. The free use of the mission hall for the purpose might, if so you pleased, have been regarded as your contribution to the funds. If you had granted the application, you might even have improved the occasion by popping in during the evening and "saying a few words." But no. You, the man of God, who must know well what the Master to whom you are bound in service said of little children, practically closed the door in their faces because they did not come with two guineas!

I do not know how men of your cloth reconcile precept and practice in matters of this sort, but I suppose it is done by trying to humbug the Lord. Take it, however, that you cannot humbug men, and that whenever the professing Christian minister does not square his acts with his sermons he fails in his duty, fails in his example, fails in his mission, and does more harm to religion than all the atheists, agnostics, and biblical critics who ever lived. If the shepherds do not keep the lamps burning, how shall the flock see the light? JOHN BULL.

To Admiral Sir Nathaniel Bowden-Smith.

DEAR ADMIRAL,—I suppose you are first man in history to refuse a pension earned by meritorious service. I can understand people being too proud to accept an income from the public purse, and I daresay there may be one or two just persons who have omitted to claim the old age pensions to which they are entitled. But the pensions awarded to naval and military officers are in the nature of deferred pay, and you need have no hesitation about accepting yours any more than you had about accepting public moneys when you were on active service. Far be it from me, however, to object to your disinterested action. Consider yourself shaken by the hand. By the way, do you happen to know Gerald Balfour?

JOHN BULL.

To Lord Ardilaun, 11, Carlton House Terrace.

MY LORD,—Was it not somewhat churlish to refuse permission for the fixing of a Gladstone memorial tablet on your house? Many people disliked the Grand Old Man when he was in the land of the living, but now we need remember only his high qualities and great reputation, which are almost a national heritage. Try to reconsider your decision by the end of the year, when we shall all be celebrating the centenary of his birth. JOHN BULL.

To Tommy Burns, The Chatter Box, Sydney.

DEAR TOMMY,—As soon as Johnson knocked you into the hospital, and all but into the cemetery, you announced that you would not fight again, and that the Ebony Stick was too vast for you, anyway. Also, before the match you played up to the Yankee and Australian press that this was your last fight, win or lose, on solemn affidavit to Mrs. B., and there were pictures of Mrs. B. in an attitude of undying affection in all the papers to corroborate the story. But now that the swelling has gone out of your eyes and your jaw has been mended, and you are a rather more whole and wholesome-looking spectacle than you were, you are letting out the gas once more, like a balloon with a hole in it. Your latest is that you will fight the nigger again, that you can beat him, and that he influenced the police to stop the fight. You always could beat him, Tommy, with your tongue; but you can rely on the reportorial accounts that what influenced the police in stopping the match was their objection to becoming responsible for your funeral. So go away, Tommy; you tire me. You have been paid up. Now own up, and shut up. JOHN BULL.

To Sir Peter Carlow Walker, Brewer, Liverpool.

SIR,—I hear, with much pleasure, that you have placed at the disposal of three prominent charity organisers of your great city a discretionary fund of £200,000 for the relief of those who, too proud to add their voices to the cry for charity, are too poor not to need it. It is not invariably the men and women suffering most from the pressure of hard times who are best known to our philanthropists. They make no poses for the tragic pictures of poverty. They do not provide headings for newspaper articles. They do not march in procession through the streets. For the most part they bear the pinch of the shoe in silence, pathetically anxious that none should know they are down in the world, hiding their misfortunes from the glare of publicity. You, sir, have thought of them. Quietly, methodically, delicately, generously, you will help them along the hard paths of their lives. So, I lift my hat to you. JOHN BULL.

Fallières, President Entente Cordiale, Paris.

Better be struck with stick of idiotic waiter than blown up with bomb of ferocious anarchist. Glad he did not much hurt you. BULL.

W. Somerset Maugham, All the Theatres.

What is your answer to *Vanity Fair's* specific charge of plagiary, fortified by long quotations in deadly parallels?

BULL.

THE TWELFTH NIGHT CAKE.

LLOYD GEORGE: "I am but a steward. Dost thou think because we are not virtuous there shall be no more cakes and ale?"

[*Twelfth Night*, Act 2, Scene 3—with variations.]

IN THE CITY.

THE REVENUE AND THE COMING DEFICIT.

So much nonsense is being talked in some quarters about the year's deficit, that it may be useful to give the facts so far as they are available at the end of nine months, that is to say, on December 31st, 1908. The comparison of the actual expenditure for the nine months with that of last year—we take the exact figures from the *Statist* of January 2nd—and with the Budget estimates of expenditures for the twelve months, are set out below :—

	1908-9.	1907-8.	Inc. or Dec.	Estimate Year.
	£	£	£	£
National Debt	15,716,594	16,174,176	— 457,582	—1,500,000
Other Consolidated Fund Services	1,263,494	1,261,249	+ 2,245	— 287,000
Payments to local taxation, &c.	7,024,040	7,023,847	+ 193	+ 335,000
Supply services	82,337,541	79,819,298	+2,518,243	+*4,327,000
Total	106,341,669	104,278,570	+2,063,099	+2,675,000

* Of this sum £1,200,000 is for old age pensions in the March quarter.

Taking both revenue and expenditure into account, the position at present is that the revenue has fallen short of the revenue of last year, and also of the estimated income of the twelve months, by about £2,500,000, and that the expenditure has just about reached the estimate.

THE NATIONAL INCOME.

If we listen to some folk we shall conclude that the country, if not hastening to bankruptcy, is at least not adding to its wealth and permanent prosperity. The facts tell a different tale if they are to be interpreted by our new investments in 1908. In the course of the twelve months, £203,000,000 of new capital was subscribed in this country for new loans and enterprises, an exceptionally large amount. When allowance is made for other countries having participated to some extent in issues specially reserved for the British market, the capital subscribed for by British investors last year was probably not less than £175,000,000. Some of it, of course, has not yet been paid up, but then there was payment in the early part of 1908 of instalments on capital placed in 1907. The actual amount of publicly issued capital paid up in 1908 has been at least £150,000,000. And beyond the savings placed in new securities, immense sums of new capital are embarked every year in the erection of houses, the building of ships, the construction and equipment of factories, the decoration and stocking of shops, and in many other ways. Probably it is true to say that the nation's expenditure for reproductive purposes—that is to say its savings—during the past year was not far short of £300,000,000. It is estimated that in 1908, we remitted about £100,000,000 of capital to other countries, and the return to the policy of providing the world with capital for the development of its wealth makes possible the continued growth in our wealth, commerce, and prosperity, which was such a striking feature of the second half of the last century.

THE L. A. THOMPSON SCENIC RAILWAYS (CONTINENTAL), LIMITED.

This Company has been formed with a capital of 100,000 Ordinary Shares of £1 each, of which the present issue is 90,000 shares, and its object is to construct and operate Scenic Railways on the Continent of Europe (British Isles excepted), and to acquire a sole and exclusive licence "so far as the vendor is in a position to grant it," to construct and operate on the Continent the L. A. Thompson Scenic Railways for a term of nine years.

A great deal is made in the prospectus of the success of the Scenic Railway at the Franco-British Exhibition, and it is assumed that it will be equally popular elsewhere. In support of this contention it is pointed out that scenic railways are what we may call a normal entertainment in the United States, where they make large profits for those who run them.

But the conclusion arrived at from these premises does not seem to us to be warranted by the facts. The people of America like these kind of amusements, and indulge in them to an extent that it is hardly likely any European community will be found to imitate. The success at the Franco-British Exhibition was exceptional, as is clearly proved by the experience of New Brighton and Manchester. The gross receipts of the Scenic Railway locate in the New Brighton Tower last season were under £2,000, and the gross receipts at the White City, Manchester, were only £1,886 3s. 9d.

GOLD-MINING IN NOVA SCOTIA.

In our issue of December 26th we published an article under this title, and we have since received a visit from Mr. J. Owen James upon the matter. Mr. James is a mining engineer, and is interested in the Flough Lead and Old Provincial Mines, and he is seeking capital in this country for their development and working. Mr. James takes exception to statements in the article in question, his contention being that many of the Nova Scotian properties mentioned are valuable propositions, and that their failure to give a satisfactory return upon the capital invested in them is due to mismanagement, rather than to the poverty of the properties themselves. For example, Mr. James says :—

> Your article does not state why the Goldenville Mines nor any of the others have stopped. The writer does not say that it is the want of gold in the quartz, but knows full well that it is want of capital to equip and develop the properties properly. That is the reason for their not being operated. Neither does he refer to the bad management, and more generally the bad management at the head offices, that is to blame.

It will be noted that Mr. James does not traverse our statements as to results, but rather takes exception to our explanation of the causes which have brought them about.

THE COSTS OF LIQUIDATION.

A Liverpool correspondent sends us the summary of trustee's receipts and payments in the matter of a small estate. Our correspondent was a creditor.

	£	s.	d.
The estate realised	164	8	0
The payments to solicitors, auctioneers and printers came to ..	128	13	9
The trustee put his remuneration at	35	14	3

Our correspondent wrote to the Inspector-General in Bankruptcy to protest, and was told in reply that "it is not within the province of this department to express an opinion as to the reasonableness of the Trustee's charges in this matter." We wonder whether it is the province of any department, or of any official, to express such an opinion, or to make any effort to keep the cost of liquidations within reasonable compass. We suppose not.

TRAMWAY REVERSES.

Preference shareholders of the London United Tramways Company have now been officially informed that the rate of dividend payable on their shares must be temporarily reduced. The expansion of traffic has not come up to expectations, taking into account the additional route mileage worked, and severe competition has seriously interfered with the growth of traffic on the main routes. The quarterly accounts are due next March, and it is believed the revenue will show a balance sufficient to provide the full preference dividend for the year, but it is considered essential to immediately strengthen the Reserve Fund in view of future renewals, so that for the present payments on account of the preference dividend, which is cumulative, are to be limited to 2⅜ per cent. per annum. In former years the Company distributed dividends ranging up to 8 per cent., on the ordinary shares, but reserves were almost totally neglected. The preference dividend amounts to £62,500 per annum, so that the accumulation of arrears makes the prospect for the ordinary shares a dismal one.

THE 'BUS AMALGAMATION.

A circular just issued to the debenture holders of the Road Car Company announces that the amalgamation of the London General, Road Car, and Vanguard Companies—of which little has been heard of late—is approaching completion. The 4 per cent. stock of the Road Company will be exchanged for 5 per cent. B debentures of the London General. We are glad to learn from the circular that the joint working of the three Companies from July 1st last has resulted in largely increased receipts, and that great reductions in expenditure have already been effected.

Messrs. Rudge Whitworth, Ltd., inform us that debenture interest warrants for the half-year ended December 31st, 1908, were posted to the debenture-holders of this Company on January 1st.

We are informed that the certificates for the £100,000 prior lien 5 per cent. Debenture Stock of the Brush Electrical Engineering Company, Ltd., can now be exchanged for allocation letters and banker's receipts at the offices of Messrs. Wheater, Cornwallis-West and Co., 5, Austin Friars, London, E.C.

BANK DIVIDENDS.

The Lancashire and Yorkshire Bank (Limited).—The directors recommend the usual dividend of 16s. per share for the past half-year, the usual appropriation of £10,000 to reserve fund, and increase the carry-forward by £4,000.

The Imperial Bank of Canada has declared a dividend for the quarter ending January 31st, at the rate of 11 per cent. per annum on the paid-up capital stock, payable on February 1st.

The profits of the Banco de Chile for the half-year ended December 31st amounted to $3,051,000. A dividend of 9 per cent. has been declared for the half-year, making a total distribution of 18 per cent. for the year 1908.

Ottoman Railway from Smyrna to Aidin.—With reference to the recent issue of Six per Cent. Preference shares and Ordinary shares, the scrip certificates will be ready for delivery on the 11th inst. in exchange for the allotment letters and bankers' receipts.

Newcastle-upon-Tyne Corporation Stock.—The Commissioners of Inland Revenue have entered into an agreement with the Corporation of Newcastle-upon-Tyne for the composition of the stamp duties payable on transfers of £300,000 Three-and-a-Half per Cent. stock (redeemable 1920). Transfers of that stock are therefore exempt.

British Coalite.—Mr. Albert G. Kitching, J.P., has resigned the chairmanship of the company.

FINANCIAL ENQUIRIES.

PREMIUM BONDS.—J. J. (Old Colwyn).—Most of the bonds are safe in a sense, but the recent decision of the Court of Appeal puts difficulties in the way of dealing with them here. We cannot advise you to deal with the outside brokers you name. C. J. A. (Manchester).—The "Bondholders' Register," 2, Nicholas Passage, Lombard Street, E.C., would give you the information you want. J. L. (Bristol).—(1) The present price for City of Brussels 1905 Bonds is about £3 18s. 6d. (2) We do not advise purchasing through the firm you mention, but recommend you to communicate with Messrs. N. Keizer and Co., of 29, Threadneedle Street, E.C., upon whom you may rely for fair treatment. (3) Genuine bonds can only be certified by experts such as the above-named firm. (4) It does not follow that the Inland Revenue stamp guarantees genuineness. Send description and numbers of your bonds. A. Z. (Pelton Fell).—You will find the list of drawings in the "Bondholders' Register."

INDUSTRIAL SHARES.—ONE TIME (Tarkwa).—It is not easy to name industrial shares offering good security and giving a yield at present prices of 7 per cent., but the following would give it and a little more. Apollinaris, Bodega, Bovril Preferred Ordinary, Financial Times, Gordon Hotels Cumulative Preference, Hovis Bread Flour, Vandenberg's Ordinary.

THE CITY OF WESTMINSTER REAL ESTATE CORPORATION.—JACK (Cwmbran).—We have little doubt that you will receive the certificate. There is often delay in sending certificates, though in your case it seems to have been exceptionally long. Whether you are well advised in the investment is another matter. We return your papers.

LONDON STANDARD MOTOR OMNIBUS COMPANY.—R. J. (Uxbridge).—It has been a miserable business from beginning to end. We can give you no information as to the present address of Messrs. Jarvis and Co.

VARIOUS SHARES.—VERACITY (Gunnersbury).—They are all fairly good.

UNIVERSAL PATENTS BUREAU, LIMITED.—MANAGER (London).—We are obliged, but the "Chartered Secretary" has already been offered, and has accepted, an appointment.

THE LAMWORTH MINES, LIMITED.—H. J. (South Croydon).—We do not advise the purchase, nor can we advise you to put money into "The Contractors, Limited, seeking for treasure in Lake Guativita, South America."

PROVINCIAL HOMES INVESTMENT COMPANY.—H. C. (Penarth).—We can quite understand your anxiety, but we think you may continue payments without undue risk.

THE NATIONAL BOND AND MORTGAGE ASSOCIATION.—H. S. (Newton-le-Willows).—We have no information respecting the position of this Association.

LLOYDS BANK.—J. R. L. (Leeds).—The answer to both your questions is in the affirmative. Lloyds Bank is one of the best in the Kingdom.

AUX CLASSES LABORIEUSES, LIMITED.—R. L. (Liverpool).—We should prefer selling out to putting more money into this concern, whose reserves are as much too small as its valuation and goodwill is excessive.

SAFE INVESTMENT.—CYMRO (Tylorstown).—(1) We think your list a very good one. (2) Local loans of course represent a first-class security, but you can get a better return for securities that are practically quite as good.

THREE MINING SHARES.—NOVIS (Farley).—They are good of their kind, but, of course, fairly speculative.

NATIONAL ALLIANCE HOUSE PURCHASE AND INVESTMENT COMPANY.—TYNEDALE (Newcastle-on-Tyne).—If you have paid in for five years there would be a surrender value, which doubtless the Company would pay you if you desired to surrender your bonds. As to sale to others in the Company, it could only be done by private negotiation, and it is not at all easy to find purchasers for securities of the kind.

CENTRAL STOCK EXCHANGE.—POOR JOE (Forest Hill).—We are unable to advise you how to recover the £35 10s. 6d. you say is due to you from these people. If you sued them they would in all probability plead the Gaming Act, and if you got judgment you would not be much nearer to getting your money. Note what was said on the subject in our last issue.

THE UNITED WORKERS' ASSOCIATION.—ANXIOUSLY WAITING (Chatteris).—We know nothing to the contrary.

FARROW'S BANK.—TYRO (London).—Yes, we think so

PURCHASE OF CONSOLS.—R. G. (Winkfield).—We have no doubt the Birkbeck Bank would effect the purchase for you.

TRANSFER OF BOND.—A. E. F. (Plymouth).—We regret we can be of no assistance to you in the matter.

PROVINCIAL HOMES INVESTMENT COMPANY.—W. G. (Sheffield).—We think that, having regard to the amalgamation, you would be quite safe in continuing your payments.

LONDON AND COUNTY PERMANENT BENEFIT SOCIETY.—T. B. (Limehouse).—The object is good, and the society appears to be making progress. We return your papers.

CHAS. COVENTRY AND COMPANY.—J. H. (Coatbridge).—Our advice to you is to have nothing to do with these people and their "5 per cent. basis."

MITCHAM AND COMPANY.—W. A. H. (High Holborn).—We will try and get it for you.

LODDON DEEP LEADS.—C. I. M. (Hove).—We have no recent information, but, judging by the news from Carter's Deep Leads, the prospect does not appear to be a bad one.

CUNLIFFE, RUSSELL AND COMPANY.—P. M. (Sheffield).—The difference between the firm's charge and the market price is explained by the fact that payments are taken by instalments, and the drawings watched on behalf of the holdings.

MYSORE WEST GOLD COMPANY.—BERLINCO (London).—None.

THE PREMIUM BOND TRUST, LIMITED.—C. E. L. (Ashburton).—(1) We have no information. (2) Have nothing to do with the Cornish Mine or the Motor Cab shares you name.

DOMINICAN GOLD MINES, LIMITED.—E. L. V. P. (Balham).—There are no dealings in these shares on the Stock Exchange, and we not think them worth the 5s. at which you say you can buy them. We do not recall any gold mine in Santo Domingo that ever gave English shareholders a dividend.

REVERSION AGENTS.—H. U. L. (St. Margaret's-on-Thames).—You were foolish to pay these people any money, as they had broken their contract. They are clearly disreputable, and no doubt the man you negotiated with deserves the "damned good hiding" you wish to give him. But we could give you no estimate of the cost in the way of coin. Besides, it is conceivable that *you* might get the hiding, which would be poor compensation for the loss of your money. Better close the account, and steer clear of such persons in the future.

INSTITUTE W. SCHIMMELPFENG.—F. AND S. (Broadstairs).—We do not agree that the questions are "impudent." Granted that the Institute's business is a legitimate one, the questions they ask you to answer are necessary, if they are to be put in a position to give the confidential information which it is their business to supply.

FANTI MINES.—H. T. S. (Leeds).—We do not advise it.

MARSHALL AND MARSHALL, LIMITED.—L. G. (East Croydon).—We will make inquiries, and let you know.

INSURANCE ENQUIRIES.

MODERN SICKNESS AND ACCIDENT ASSURANCE ASSOCIATION.—F. M. (Tuebrook).—The association promises a great deal. Whether it can and does do it all is a question we are not in a position to answer.

SELF-HELP ASSURANCE ASSOCIATION.—W. E. M. (Bridgend).—We have no information respecting this association.

MAJESTIC ASSURANCE COMPANY.—DINGLE (Clydach Dingle).—We think not.

PEARL ASSURANCE COMPANY.—C. J. (Merthyr Tydvil).—Certainly. How could insurance companies carry on their business if their policy-holders were entitled to all the monies they have paid in when they think fit to change to another company?

SCOTTISH SICKNESS AND ACCIDENT ASSURANCE COMPANY.—CONSTANT READER (Leith).—(1) We think you may do so. (2) We thank you for your good wishes.

TWO INSURANCE COMPANIES.—C. E. O. (Elgin Avenue).—They are not, of course, in the front rank, but we think you may insure without apprehension.

BRITISH EQUITABLE ASSURANCE COMPANY, LIMITED.—T. Y. (Hull).—If you cannot continue to pay the premium, you should come to an arrangement with the company or sell your interest in the policy, upon which, as you say, you have been paying for 45 years. Send us your address, and we will see what can be done.

THE LEGAL AND COMMERCIAL INSURANCE COMPANY.—J. B. (Folkestone).—This Company was formed at the latter end of 1907 with an authorised capital of £250,000, £100,000 of which is subscribed, and £25,000 paid up, leaving £75,000 for the benefit of policy holders. It has a strong Board. The Company has made considerable headway, having acquired a valuable connection amongst solicitors. It is the first of the Insurance Companies to transact insurance against mental breakdown. It is a startling fact that over 126,000 persons are certified insane in England and Wales alone, which represents 1 in every 280. The Company contends that with this insurance a life policy is more complete, because in the event of the policy holder's brain giving way the premiums can be paid to keep the policy in force. The wife and family are supported and the maintenance of the assured provided for. This insurance has been very favourably received, especially when combined with the several benefits under the accident policies. The Legal and Commercial also claims to be the only Company covering motor car mechanical breakdowns without extra charge.

THE LAW INTEGRITY INSURANCE COMPANY.—DAVE (Exeter).—It is obviously impossible for us to say what the motive of the man was, but our own advice to you is not to take out a policy.

BRITISH GENERAL INSURANCE COMPANY.—JOAN (Port Talbot).—We know of no sufficient reason why you should not do so. It is a young Company, only established in 1904. Its authorised capital is £250,000, and at the end of last year £63,159 was subscribed in shares of £1, and paid up £16,165. The subscribed capital has since been increased to £100,000. It paid a 5 per cent. dividend for last year. The Company transacts fire, burglary, accident, and miscellaneous insurance. Its premium income last year was £22,173, and its assets at the close of the year £28,135.

THE NATIONAL CO-OPERATIVE SICK AND ACCIDENT SOCIETY.—We have received the following letter:—"Having noticed you do not recommend the National Co-operative Sick and Accident Society as a good investment, I agree with you. I will just give you my experience. I was passing a shop last October—the 9th, to be exact—when I saw a large bill announcing the fact that for 1s. a month you got the following benefits: £1 a week for 26 weeks any illness, £1 for 26 weeks any accident, £10 at death, any cause, and £100 for death through any accident. I thought I had dropped on a good thing, so went into the shop and paid 2s., the sum asked, which meant 1s. for proposal form, and 1s. for to cover that month's subscription. After waiting three weeks and hearing nothing, I wrote to headquarters, but heard nothing from them, so waited another two weeks and wrote again. Then they had the courtesy to answer and say they had not received my proposal form, so I went to their agent and made enquiries, and found that he had omitted to send my form in until the day before I waited another two weeks, still no policy, so wrote the firm. Still no answer. I wrote again in another ten days, and received a membership card dated November 25th. In my last letter to them I told them to return my contributions. After receiving that letter they sent me the card referred to, so I sent it back for them to alter the date, as I did not consider I should have to stand to their agent's negligence, as the conditions of membership are that you should be a member for three months before being in benefit, and I did not see that I should lose the six weeks through their agent's negligence, and as I returned the card on November 27th. I have written twice since, but have still received no reply, so I am inclined to think your advice to your subscribers good."

BRITISH HOMES ASSURANCE.—C. H. T. (Shoreham).—We think you may carry out your intended transactions with the corporation in confidence that there will be satisfactory results. BRITANNIA (Wood Green).—We agree as to the probable value to be got, but we are afraid we cannot help you in the matter of getting a £300 endowment policy, but if any of our readers has one he wishes to dispose of, upon which he has paid for five years, and he will communicate with us, we will put him in touch with you. W. H. M. (Huntingdon).—The answer to your first two questions is in the affirmative. We understand that the result of the application was quite satisfactory.

BRITISH MUTUAL ASSURANCE ASSOCIATION.—CONSTANT READER (Bashford).—The answer is in the negative.

SUN LIFE ASSURANCE COMPANY.—S. W. (Black Rock).—Yes, quite safe.

ONE AND ALL SICKNESS AND ACCIDENT ASSOCIATION.—D. McC. (Stirling).—We fear you have no option but to close your connection with the Association, which is in liquidation.

BRITISH FIRE INSURANCE COMPANY.—F. E. (Bromley).—We will make some enquiries and let you know.

AMONG THE LAWYERS.

A MISFIT IN "CAPS."

A Hornchurch reader has sent us a circular issued by a Mr. John Ferguson, said to be a local tradesman, to a person against whom he thinks he has a claim. It is printed on official-looking blue paper, headed "Notice before Proceeding in the County Court" (the last four words in tremendous type), "as per 9th and 10th Victoria, cap. 25," and the whole get-up is obviously intended to lead the recipient to believe that it emanates from the County Court officials. The "9th and 10th Victoria, cap. 25" is simply the Act, passed in 1846, instituting County Courts for the recovery of debts under £20 and superseding Courts of Requests, and we should like Messrs. Andrews and Co., of 173, Old Strect, E.C. (whose name appears on the notice as the printers), to point out to us anything in that Act countenancing such an effusion. But what we particularly protest against are the two paragraphs printed at the foot of the document:—

By the 20th and 21st Vic. cap. 101, sec. I., it is enacted:—That where a person shall have been summoned, and shall have neglected to attend, and shall not allege sufficient excuse for not attending, or shall, if attending refuse to be sworn, or disclose any circumstances, or not make answer to the satisfaction of the Judge: or it shall appear to the satisfaction of the Judge that the party summoned had then, or since the judgment was obtained against him sufficient means and ability to pay either altogether or by instalment, and shall have neglected or refused so to do, the Judge may, in either of such cases if he shall so think fit, order such party to be committed to the common gaol, or to any gaol or prison for the same county, city, or any place, for any period not exceeding FORTY DAYS.

Rule 120 enacts:—That when a defendant makes default in payment of the whole amount awarded by the judgment, or of any instalment thereof, execution may issue against his goods, and such execution shall be for the whole amount of the judgment and costs then remaining unsatisfied, unless in the case of instalments, the Judge otherwise objects at the time of giving judgment.

The person receiving this threatening notice is obviously wished to believe that if he does not attend when "summoned," or neglects to pay, he may be imprisoned, the fact really being that this quotation is only applicable to judgment summonses (*i.e.*, cases in which judgment has been given for the plaintiff, but the amount has not been paid), and that even then the onus of proving the means of the debtor to pay rests on the creditor. A further aggravating circumstance is that the "notice" was sent by the open halfpenny post.

MAGISTRATES AND MISS JOHNSTON.

In our issue of December 26th we commented upon the extraordinary conduct of the magistrates at the Armagh Petty Sessions in convicting Miss Ellen Johnston, a governess-housekeeper, in the employ of a local dentist, for assaults upon his children, although the children gave evidence denying that they had been assaulted, and the only evidence against Miss Johnston was that of a policeman and a messenger boy. It will be remembered that the magistrates sentenced Miss Johnston to a month's imprisonment, and refused to state a case for a superior Court. We have now received a letter from Messrs. Joshua Peel and Son, solicitors, of Armagh, in which they write:—

"You appear to think that steps of some kind should be taken to have the decision of the magistrates set aside. You will, therefore, be glad to learn that on the day following the conviction an application was made to the King's Bench Division in Dublin by our counsel, grounded on the affidavit of cur Mr. John A. Peel, for a conditional order of *certiorari* to quash the convictions and of *habeas corpus* to release Miss Johnston, and upon such application the conditional order was granted, to be argued on 8th December. That on 8th December the case was fully argued, counsel for the Crown appearing on behalf of the magistrates to support the convictions, and the convictions were then ordered to be quashed, and an order was made for Miss Johnston's immediate release, and Miss Johnston was released on a direction to that effect by wire from the Clerk of the Crown to the Governor of Armagh Gaol."

We congratulate Miss Johnston upon the result of her appeal, but it is nothing less than monstrous that she should have been treated as she was by these Armagh dunderheads.

LIEUT. WOODS AND THE ARMY COUNCIL.

It is difficult to see how Lieut. Woods can win the action he has commenced against the Army Council. He claims damages against the then members of the Council for requiring him to resign his commission in the Grenadier Guards. But how does he get over the section of the Royal Warrant, which runs:—

> An Officer who has not been guilty of misconduct may at any time be called upon to retire or to resign his commission should the circumstances of the case in the opinion of the Army Council require it.

It may or may not be wise to invest the Council with this arbitrary power; but wise or not, it has it.

LEGAL ANSWERS.

MISAPPROPRIATION OF ESTATE.—RECOVERY (London).—If the will has not been properly carried out, the persons who are entitled to the property can bring an action to recover possession, and make the son who has misapplied the property hand it over. The Court would have to be applied to to appoint a Receiver of the estate, and to do this you would have to employ a solicitor.

LOAN ON POLICY.—B. J. T.—You seem to have borrowed more than the policy is worth, and the holder of the policy is justified in asking for further security. Your best course is to decline to pay any further premiums, and leave him to do what he likes. You did not put your address on the query.

PREPARATION OF DOCUMENTS.—OLD READER (East Ham).—Anyone can prepare the documents, provided that he does not charge for it, as only a solicitor can charge.

BREAKING OF INDENTURES.—E. R. F. (Mile End).—You cannot recover the son's riding money, or get back his indentures, under the circumstances, as he did not fulfil the engagement.

SITTINGS OF COURTS.—F. A. S. (Huddersfield).—Judges do not sit to try cases on Sundays.

TENANCY AGREEMENT.—E. D. (Maida Hill).—You cannot break the agreement for the reason stated. Noises are a necessary condition of flat life, and, unless the noise in your case is such as to constitute a nuisance at law, you could do nothing.

PURCHASE OF DOG.—A. H. W. (Middelburg).—There was a clear agreement that the dog was to be sold with a pedigree, and you should refuse to pay unless it is forthcoming. You can repudiate the bargain, and claim the return of what you have paid.

RECOVERY OF DEBT.—C. (Barnes).—You have no remedy, and must wait till the officer is within the jurisdiction of the English Courts.

CITY FREEMEN.—S. J. C. (Walthamstow).—The children of a Freeman are not entitled as of right to anything, nor is the widow, so far as we know; but, if the father was a member of a City Company, you should apply to that Company for assistance, as there are funds which are distributed to deserving persons.

MARRIAGE.—McC. (Rotherhithe).—The pronouncement of the Pope in regard to mixed marriages has no effect in England, and does not invalidate any marriage which has been performed according to English law. These ecclesiastical views on marriage are impudently put forward to frighten people by making them think that a marriage elsewhere than in a Roman Catholic Church is invalid and the children bastards, but they are of no force. Indeed, it is possible that any priest who gave expression to such views could be made liable under the law for slandering the woman, by suggesting that she was not properly married.

MONEY LENDING.—J. W. W. (Regent's Park).—A person who lends money to his friends and does not carry on the business of lending to the public is not required to register.

INTESTACY.—MAJOR (Dalston).—Assuming that the property is all personal property and none of it is freehold, the estate would be divided into three parts, and each of the daughters living would take one share and the children of the deceased daughter would take the other share.

SOCIETY FUNDS.—ROSSIGNOL (Clapham).—We see nothing illegal in what is proposed, provided that the society is not a registered benefit society, whose rules prohibit such an application of the funds

ADVERTISEMENT HOARDINGS.—E. W. T. (Harringay).—As B took possession, he did so subject to any rights that the advertising firm had, but, as they had no written agreement, all they seem to have is a tenancy at will: and, in that case, B can remove the hoardings after giving reasonable notice to the firm. It seems to us to be open to question whether the firm ever had a lease, as they appear to be merely licensees, and, as they have not applied for a licence from B and have paid no rent, B is in a position to remove the hoardings without compensation.

NATIONALITY.—N. E. R. (Stanhope).—A person who is born of English parents, or of an English father in America is a British subject. See the Statutes 7 Anne c. 5 and 4, Geo. IV. c. 21.

LOSS OF TOOTH.—H. H. (Merton).—We doubt if you could recover damages for the loss of a tooth under the circumstances stated.

DRESSMAKING.—MISFIT (Tufnell Park).—If the tailoress sues you for the amount of her claim, you should set up a counter claim for the expense to which you have been put in altering it. Your best course is to inform her that you will do so, and offer to pay her the balance before she commences any proceedings.

SPECULATIVE LITIGATION.—E. O. G. (City Road).—We regret that we cannot refer you to anyone who will take up the case for you without payment.

PARTNERSHIP.—F. A. M. (Staffs).—C. has a claim for the whole amount against each of the partners, and he can sue A. for any balance which he does not get from B.

COMPANY'S SIGNATURE.—"PAR" (Ilford).—The agreement signed by the managing director is valid as against the Company.

ALLEGED LIBEL.—A. N. (Wood Green).—The card is not a libel, and no action could be maintained on it.

COMMISSION.—"CAXTON" (Clapham).—It seems to us that you can make out a good claim for commission on the orders, and if you sue the Company in the County Court the cost would be small—less than 20s. to get the summons issued.

SUPERTAX.—J. H. (Holloway).—Your best course is to write to the Commissioners of Inland Revenue, Somerset House, and lay the matter before them, and ask for the repayment of the tax overpaid.

SECRETARY'S LIABILITY.—"COMPANY" (Campbell Street).—If the secretary acted on instructions, he need not concern himself as to the omission of the directors to have the accounts made up.

LENGTH OF NOTICE.—"SALARY" (Bristol).—As far as we can judge, you are engaged on a weekly term, and can give, or must take a week's notice. The sum payable to you at the end of each quarter does not affect the matter.

EMPLOYER'S RIGHTS.—F. P. (Manchester).—The young lady has no claim on the employers.

SOUTH HACKNEY'S NEW YEAR'S GREETING TO ITS MEMBER.

(To the tune of "Tommy Atkins.")

Horatio, brave Horatio,
Sure your pluck we all admire;
And to see you beat your enemies
Is what our hearts desire;
May you soon emerge triumphant
Over all the motley crew;
Remember to the finish
That South Hackney's staunch to you.

The above verse was sung at every working man's club—and at many other places in South Hackney as the clock struck twelve on New Year's Eve. We trust that in reproducing it we are guilty of neither impropriety nor contempt of court.

THAT AIRSHIP FACTORY.

We have received the following interesting letter from a Durham reader, in reference to the present condition of things at the military airship factory :—

You refer in your issue of December 26th to the doings of the military airship factory. May I be permitted to state a few facts on the subject, which are well known in military circles in Aldershot?

You say that the factory may not be "exactly a happy home." Well, I cannot imagine that Colonel S. F. Cody finds it a bed of roses, and if he eventually seeks other fields and gives his valuable services to another Government, no right-minded Englishman could blame him. Unfortunately for Col. Cody, but fortunately for our country, he has a distinct leaning towards our little island, and is a Britisher at heart, though he has fared very badly at the hands of our Government. Col. Cody is really the only aeronaut who has made a life study of air navigation at present at the airship depot, and yet to the meanest capacity it is evident that he is deliberately kept in the background. He has the cheapest of materials to work on, and is handicapped in every way. In the first place, the gas-bag of the Nulli Secundus was made *five* years previous to the airship itself, and was considered by Col. Cody as entirely unsuitable for his invention and experiments. And with regard to the rest of the work on the Nulli, instead of it being left in his hands, the suggestions of half-a-dozen would-be aeronauts had to be carried out. "Too many cooks, etc.," was never a more suitable quotation than in this case. And yet, both Col. Capper and Col. Cody ventured on that trip by air to London in this conglomeration of notions and ideas! They were both brave men indeed!

Then you refer to the "something called an airship" that takes periodical trips over Cove Common. In reality, this "something" *might* have achieved more than any power aeroplane yet invented. Col. S. F. Cody went to Paris to order for the airship depot the only motor that he considered would make his aeroplane the most efficient yet produced. But it was not to be. When the engine arrived at the factory at Farnborough, it was not used for Col. Cody's invention, but for a toy—it can be called nothing else—invented by a man with no practical experience of aeronautics, but whose sole knowledge was derived from the drawing of plans and diagrams. It will be remembered that this machine made its fiasco at Blair Athol, Scotland, over a year ago, where it was found to be too heavy to even leave the ground.

JOHN BULL would do well to make a thorough investigation of these matters. Besides the cost of the upkeep of the airship depot, Col. S. F. Cody is in receipt of a handsome salary, and yet is allowed to do nothing. This state of affairs is neither fair to the ingenious and ambitious American, nor to the ratepayers.

MRS. HAMLET'S SOLILOQUY.

BY WALTER MOORE

To vote or not to vote,—that is the question:—
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind, to suffer
The degradation of domestic duties,
Or to wag flags before our tyrant brothers,
And by our shouting bend them?—To vote, to speak,—
No more; and by a speech to think we end
The heart-ache, and the thousand household cares
That woman's heir to?—'tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wish'd. To vote, to speak;—
To speak, perchance to scream; ay, there's the rub;
For in *our* parliament what screams may hum
When we have shuffled off domestic toil,
And wag our jaws: there's the respect
Of men, which constitutes the salt of life;
For who would bear the dull domestic grind,
The housemaid's song, "Hullo! Hullo! Hullo!"
The pangs of tight-laced stays,
The insolence of milkmen, and the spurns
The mistress patiently from fat cook takes,
When she herself might her own comfort make
With a bare franchise? Who would tight shoes wear,
And grunt and sweat under a monstrous hat,
But that the dread of losing things most dear,
The love and admiration of male things,—
The kiss, the fond embrace, the secret squeeze
From which no woman turns,—puzzles the will,
And makes us rather bear those ills we have
Than fly to others that we know not of?
Thus sentiment makes cowards of us all,
And our pretended hue of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought;
And enterprises of great noise and ferment,
With this regard, their currents turn awry,
And lose their militant action—Soft you now!
Here comes Lloyd George!

DOCTOR AND PATIENT DISCOVER CURE FOR CATARRH AND ADENOIDS.

Discovery of Method of Freeing the Air-Passages that Renders Continuance of this Hitherto Incurable Complaint Impossible.

Great success is now attending a new cure for Catarrh and Adenoids.

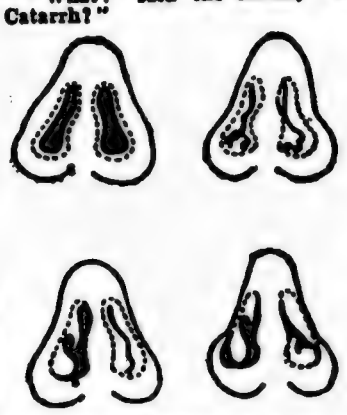
It is interesting to note that the cure is the joint discovery of a doctor and his patient, between whom there was a bond of mutual sympathy and interest developed by reason of the fact that both suffered from Catarrh. The patient's case was the worse of the two. Indeed, the patient's lungs were beginning to be seriously affected, and what with the constant asthmatic coughing and spitting, and the difficulty of breathing, his life became a struggle for breath itself.

The doctor's own personal interest in the treatment of Catarrh led him to take unusual interest in the case, and this, that, and the other thing were tried, but all without avail, and the patient steadily grew worse.

It is significant that the medical man confined his search to the domain of drugs—such is the power of one's special training. The only thing that seemed to benefit the patient was a balsamic and antiseptic compound. But the latter only temporarily relieved, it did not cure.

One morning the doctor was astonished to receive an early visit from his patient while at breakfast.

"What!" said the doctor, "have you found a cure for your and my Catarrh?"



"Yes, I believe I have," said the patient-visitor.

"Yes, I, too, believe you have," declared the doctor, after hearing his patient's account of his discovery.

Now, the whole story of the discovery and the physiological "Reason Why" are set forth in a treatise which the doctor and his patient have together compiled and published for the benefit of other catarrh-afflicted members of the public.

Doctor and patient have only just published their joint treatise. First the doctor wanted to try the discovery on himself. He did, and he quickly got well. Even then the conservatively scientific mind of the doctor (much as he wished to believe the discovery to be the long-awaited cure for Catarrh) raised doubts and fears in regard to the discovery, especially as to whether it would cure all other catarrh sufferers as well as one or two.

The cured and sanguine patient was all for publishing the good news at once—a single swallow was the sign of summer to him; but the doctor, while not sceptical, preferred to wait for further evidence of the curative power of the discovery. Accordingly, the cure was tried on friends of patient and doctor alike. Each searched the highways and byways of his acquaintanceship for catarrh and adenoid-affected persons, and one after another, men and women of all ages, quickly got rid of their catarrh.

The doctor is even now writing a technical treatise for the benefit of his professional brethren, and no doubt would have felt it his duty to confine his knowledge within ethical limits. He realised, however, that the important part played in the discovery by a member of the public renders it impossible for him to act in any professionally selfish spirit towards the public.

Hence the book just published is offered to any member of the public who wishes to know how to cure his or her catarrh, adenoids, or other nose-breathing difficulties, whether it be slight, or the more advanced stages, where the ears and hearing, or the lungs and breathing, are affected.

It is curious, too, to note that the treatment is an absolute cure for "snoring."

"Respiratory Re-Education: A Cure for Catarrh." is the title of this book, a copy of which will be sent free of cost and post free to all who send penny stamp for postage to—The Publishers, "Respiratory Re-Education," 37, Rhycol Building, 130, Fleet Street, London, E.C.—[ADVT.]

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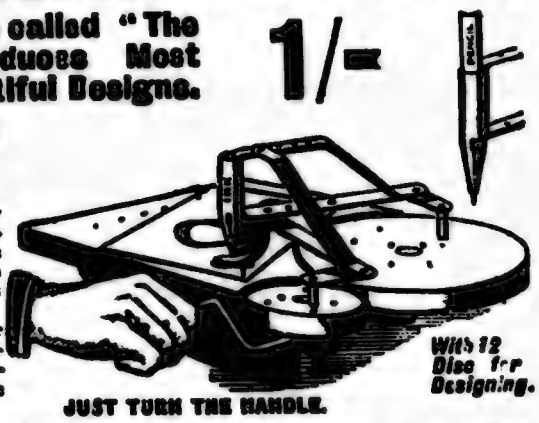
The Scientific Novelty of 1909.

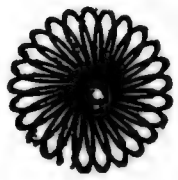
Each year sees one novelty outstrip all others in popularity. The Novelty that is all the rage this Season is the appropriately named "Mysterion."

The "Mysterion" is the invention of an Englishman who took first Honours in Mechanical Science Tripos at Cambridge.



JUST TURN THE HANDLE.

The possibilities of "The Mysterion" are truly mystifying in their infinite variety. There is no end to the exquisitely beautiful and puzzlingly intricate designs that this marvellous machine will produce at the rate of one every half-minute. It is a Scientific Novelty that *remains a novelty for days, weeks, and months.*



"The Mysterion" designs with either pen or pencil.

Every reader desirous of securing one (or more) of "The Mysterion" had better send order at once. Careful attention will be paid to orders of readers who desire several "Mysterions" sent to different addresses. The price is only 1s. (or 1s. 3d. carriage paid), or with 50 each extra Circular and Irregular Designing Discs (100 extra), 1s. 9d., post free. Two "Mysterions" *to same address* for 2s. 3d. Three for 3s. Six for 5s. If sent to different addresses, Two for 2s. 4d. Three for 3s. 3d. Six for 6s. Senders' cards or notes will be correctly enclosed if required. *Agents wanted.*

The PLAYGROUND OF SCIENCE

(Inventors and Patentees of Scientific Novelties),

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THE HURLY BURLY.

BY THEODORE DAHLE.

PROPHETIC PHASES OF THE BAXTER BUNKUM.

Under the heading "Illustrated Fiction Supplement" the *British Weekly* publishes a full page advertisement sent by the Prophet Baxter, a clergyman of notorious antecedents, who runs a lamentable religious treatise within the purlieus of the London Fleet. The object of the advertisement is to sell a pernicious book of bunkum entitled "Twenty Coming Events," written by this pernicious parson. The "Coming Events" are prophecies concerning the end of this age, and cover a period of ten years. The trouble begins with the Ten-horned Wild-beast and the Ten-toed Image, develops into wars, earthquakes, commotions, famines, pestilences, and religious revivals, the casting down of Satan and his angels to the earth, the miraculous transportation through the air of all true Christians into a wilderness, the woe of demon-scorpion locusts, the pouring out of the seven vials, a "Socialist emperor of wide-world power who will make all who buy or sell bear the mark 666 on their forehead or hands and kill those who refuse," and the resurrection and translation to Heaven of all remaining Christians, the grand *finale* being reached at the battle of Armageddon with the descent of Christ on Mount Olivet and the blessed Millennium of a thousand years.

Ever since I was a small boy Baxter has been frightening old women with his end-of-the-world prophecies, and not once, to my knowledge, has he ever given a winner. There was a time when he sought his Antichrists among the Bourbons, but no sooner did he pick one out as a likely sort of person for the post than the gentleman promptly died off. Now, in the year of grace 1909, he has a vision of a Socialist emperor of wide-world power who is going to brand all who buy and sell with the number of the Ten-horned Beast; but whether that mighty potentate is to be Bill Crooks or Keir Hardie, Bill Thorne or Victor Grayson, the prophet doth not reveal. Probably further and fuller particulars will appear in his next.

I am not one of those people who wish unduly to interfere with anybody's collection in this world, whether he is a blind man rattling a tin at the end of a yellow dog or a white-chokered prophet scooping the shekels of the populace into a wide-awake hat, always providing that the blind man or the prophet is the genuine article. But whenever I see Baxter out with the hat he makes my blood curdle, for I know that he is about the deadest failure as a prophet which this world has produced.

As far back as 1877 Baxter was prophesying the end within the next half-dozen years; and about 1883 I remember having months of bad nights waiting for trouble. But nothing happened. After that he fixed the date of the aerial flight of Christians for 1890, and once more they did not fly. Later he had another shot, for he said "the year 1893, or at the furthest, 1895, seems clearly indicated to be the end of the Dispensation." Once more the Dispensation did not end. But this did not worry him, and a few months later he started calculating all over again, with the result that he announced the Millennium for 1896 or 1900. "The disappearance of those who were found watching," he said, "would cause great surprise, and the newspapers would contain long reports of the events. Perhaps there would be long reports in the newspapers for the missing ones, but nothing would be left except their clothes." I wanted to report the proceedings, and get a scoop with the news. In vain; all the Christians who disappeared between 1896 and 1900 were accounted for.

This appears to have pretty well convinced Baxter that he was either a good humbug or a bad prophet, or a Christian who was somehow destined to be left behind for a long time anyhow, for he promptly renewed the lease of his business premises for another 99 years, and then settled down to make further calculations. The net result was that he put forward the resurrection of saints and the ascension of 144,000 living Christians, specially selected, to 1903, but the saints did not resurrect and the Christians did not ascend. In 1904 Napoleon Antichrist was to commence his reign of persecution, but he did not rise to the occasion; and 1907–8 was to be marked by the destruction of Antichrist, the battle of Armageddon and the 1,000 years Millennium. I have waited in pleasant anticipation of that Millennium until this moment, having booked seats for self and friends in the stalls. Now the tickets are wasted, and I shall have to get a fresh lot with dates forward.

And a long time forward, mark you, for Baxter still merrily lives and merrily prophesies. As aforementioned, he has now postponed the last day of this age and the beginning of the thousand years Millennium until Thursday, April 9th, 1931, long before which, in the nature of things, he will have been gathered to his fathers by the natural arrest of this his mortal life, having previously made his will, leaving behind him, I do not doubt, a considerable portion of the handsome collections he has taken from the fool section of the British public by means of the *Christian Herald and Signs of Our Times*, "Forty Coming Wonders," and other comic literature and lectures. I doubt whether there is any other prophet, living or dead, who has made bunkum pay so well. I am more than half inclined to fix up a cigar box with a slit in it and go into the business myself, if he will kindly go out of it. I could not hope to lay up treasure in the face of such experienced competition.

HOTELS AND THE STARVING

BY S. M. G.

It is chiefly when winter comes upon us and the biting cold mocks at cosy fires and warm clothing, that we realise what must be the sufferings of the starving poor and the homeless. Unfortunately, the efforts of numberless good Samaritans to alleviate the distress this winter are minimised because there are more mouths to feed, more aching hearts to solace. The serried ranks of the unemployed, although including not a few unemployable, comprise a larger proportion than usual of honest toilers for whom there is no toil available. But even they are mere units in the sphere of relentless poverty. It is the hungry wives and children of these helpless creatures who should inspire pity—pity of the type that breathes the true religious spirit. To give a foodless father a basin of soup is not to fill the empty stomachs of the family whose sole support he is, or should be. And to comfort oneself with the reflection that the organised charities can cope with the desperate condition of a huge army minus bread or shelter, is to betray a selfish ignorance.

Naturally, the reader will ask what can be done, assuming the possibility of doing something, more than has yet been attempted. The answer is, a great deal. It is not necessary that everyone should give money. It is not necessary that any of us should make big sacrifices to tide these miserable starvelings over a winter that promises to be trying in severity, and characterised by exceptional trade depression. There is such a thing as cheap but effectual charity—to give to the workless and hungry that which in many establishments is consigned to the dust-bin. I refer, of course, to wholesome food which may be called the residuum of the dining-room and the kitchen. Take, for example, the waste edibles from the big hotels. Are these unconsidered trifles? There is scarcely a West End hostelry which does not throw away in the course of twenty-four hours sufficient food to provide a sound meal for a score of foodless beings. Indeed, I could name one hotel where, on the morning after Christmas, the refuse box was laden with choice specimens of uncooked gizzards that in less pretentious circles would be regarded as delicacies, and other tempting morsels of animal food. No doubt the matutinal scavenger was glad of the harvest; but it is painful to think that such a sight could be witnessed at a time when the newspapers are ringing with the sad prevalence of dire want in the community. Probably, if the truth could be arrived at, it would be found that this was no isolated case. The point is, however, that hotels, not to mention restaurants, are able, if they will, to assuage the hunger of many of the destitute, and I am sure the managerial heads will readily fall in with the suggestion that the clean leavings from their tables and larders should be devoted to so worthy a cause.

There must be quite five-and-twenty first-class hotels in London, and an even larger number of first-class restaurants. But let us fix the total at fifty, and the amount of good food each relegates to the dustbin as ample for twenty meals per diem. On this basis they could between them feed no less than one thousand stomachs once a day. Probably my figures err on the side of caution. In any event, they only relate to well-known establishments. By applying the principle to the less fashionable hotels and restaurants, it would not be difficult to prove that two or three thousand of the starving poor could keep body and soul together on that which is now carted away as refuse.

The question of collection does not appear to present any difficulty, for half-a-dozen hand-barrows would suffice to cover the ground in an hour or so in the morning. The distribution, again, would be easy. There is but one need—that of a few willing workers who will form themselves into a committee and give effect to the idea.

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AMONG THE MUMMERS.

POLITICS ON THE STAGE.

Several of the pantomimes now running in the London district are marred to some extent by unnecessary, and one or two by offensive political allusions. I am not one of those over-serious persons who seem to think that politics, like religion, is a matter that should never be joked about. Far from this, I am glad to meet a good jape whenever and wherever I can discover it, whatever its subject. My complaint is that the political joke on the stage is almost always a very poor one: the political joke in pantomime being the very worst of its kind. When the comedian takes himself seriously as a politician and waves a flag, or talks of the greatness of Joe, there is often a spice of unconscious humour about him that appeals to me. But that precisely is when, from the point of view of many of his hearers, I fancy, he is most in error. Strong party politicians do not like to have to pay to hear the opposite view expressed, whether by a person wreathed in Primrose smiles or pantomime grease-paint and fake enthusiasm. All sections of politics, except the most virulent form of Nonconformist conscience, are represented in a holiday audience at the theatre; therefore, whilst for a mummer it is bad business always to risk offending any part of his patrons, it is peculiarly unbusinesslike to let off poor wit, or heartfelt prejudice during a pantomime. We go to the play-house to be amused, and the comedian dabbling in politics is never amusing. Let this be an instruction!

DANCING TO THE LIONS.

Far from being opposed to a wholesale sacrifice of the over-supply of Salome dancers to the lions at Earl's Court or elsewhere, I should be willing to subscribe a small sum toward the expense of so admirable a movement. But one condition I would lay down. It must be a private massacre, not a public one. The King of the Forest (or the Wild Beast Show) should be served informally, with the ladies each on a suitable dish, and left to enjoy his meal in peace. Perhaps, at a pinch, we might agree among ourselves as to the desirability of adding as a sort of make-weight one or two other so-called entertainers of the people. My proposal is an alternative to the offer of a certain enterprising management which is inviting "courageous, resolute" ladies "of good appearance" to dance in a lion's den. In reply to inquiries by a solicitous Press, we are informed that the exhibition will be "perfectly safe." Such shows always are perfectly safe until one fine day they turn out otherwise. The lion, we are told for our further satisfaction, is "an old stager who for many years has been entrusted with leading *rôles* at circus performances." Therefore, says the *Daily News*, "the prepossessing young lady need have no alarm." If you see it in the *Daily News* it is so, sometimes. Besides "standing by her side in the cage will be the keeper of the quadruped ready to suppress any sign of disapproval should His Majesty not quite appreciate the *entrechats* of the dancer." Precisely; there is no danger, but one never knows. This journal has done its share of protesting against an undue interference with popular amusements by the governing authorities; but it is very difficult to convince the decent public that a benevolent despotism is not needed when stale, fly-blown old wheezes of this type—sheer panderings to the morbid tastes of the gutter—are trotted out at reputable places of entertainment. It is especially inopportune just now, because we are about to be threatened with drastic efforts to curb the liberty of popular enjoyment still further, through the medium of a Dangerous Performances Bill, which, no doubt, would prohibit many harmless acts of skill into which an element of risk may enter, simply because a few wicked and really dangerous acts are presented from time to time. The suggestion is that the young ladies of "good appearance" may be mauled by this *blasé* old lion: that is the bait for the mob. The assurance of safety is a dubious piece of blague. I hope that someone whose opinion carries weight will drop a hint that this kind of thing is out-of-date and disagreeable to whoever may be the licensing body for the resort in question.

A DRURY LANE CANARD.

It is a great pity that when an actor or actress falls ill on the eve of a big production in which he was to play a leading *rôle* uncharitable and ill-informed persons should rush in to invent weird explanations. Mr. Neil Kenyon is suffering not merely from a nervous breakdown, but from these ignoble gossipers. It is suggested that he and Mr. Wilkie Bard are jealous of one another and that this is the real reason for Mr. Kenyon's absence from the list at Old Drury. As a matter of fact, Mr. Kenyon and Mr. Bard (two of our comedians, by the way, who are really funny and have brains) are the best of friends; and there is not an atom of foundation for the ridiculous reports of which they are the subject.

MR. CHARLES MANNERS AND BUDDING TALENT.

I have received a very interesting letter, written from Dublin by Mr. Charles Manners, containing proposals to treat with ladies who may seem to have a future on the operatic stage; some of whom have written sisterly letters to me recently asking for my advice as to how to get on in the world. I shall refer more fully to the Manners letter at a later date.

THE BANSHEE AND THE "LEPRECHAWN."

This heading has no relation to the Pat Campbell-Yeats season at the New Theatre, but to Mr. A. E. Pickard, of so-called "Leprechaun" fame. A Scottish correspondent points out to me that, judging by his advertisements, Mr. Pickard has now forgotten even how to spell "leprechaun"; also that in recent issues of the Press he has described himself or his company, "A. E. Pickard, Unlimited," as the "Banshee," a "Parvenu," the "Genius Loci," a "Naturalist," the "Analizer," a "Bridge-builder," the "Impressario," the "Captain," the "Commander," a "Freakologist," "Restaurateur," etc.; likewise, that the stumer "leprechaun" has now given place as prime attraction to "The Heaviest Lady on Earth.—Open all Day." One may see the Pickard show for twopence! It seems a pity to waste so much humorous invention on so cheap an affair. Why doesn't he charge more and send along that £1,000 for the unemployed?

BEAUTY SHOWS: A DIFFERENCE OF OPINION.

I am not altogether surprised that the gentleman responsible for the Beauty Show at Earl's Court disapproves of my disapproval of his and other beauty shows. He says:—

> Had you (or the writer of those notes) been present on either evening you would have had a totally different opinion of beauty shows. It would be almost impossible to find a more respectable body of ladies than those who competed in this great show. There were rich and poor, and I am pleased to say the first prize of £50 was awarded to one of the poorest competitors, and there is no doubt it will bring great joy and happiness into her home this Yuletide. You also mention that you "can imagine few more degrading ways in which a woman could hope to get money without earning it." Why you should consent to such an absurd remark being published is beyond me, for you must know as a man of the world that there are many worse ways of obtaining money than appearing at a beauty show, where I may say the successful competitors receive pounds, not "paltry shillings," as you call it.

It was just because I am "a man of the world" and not to be led astray by showman talk that I wrote what I did. It was an expression of opinion, to which I still adhere, although, naturally, I do not expect the promoter of a beauty show to agree with me. Nor shall I argue the point with him: we differ on a question of taste, and that is really the end of the matter. The richness or poverty or respectability or disrepute of the winner has nothing to do with the case: no more than it would have in the case of a competition for the fattest woman or the thinnest, or the ugliest, to all of which shows I am equally opposed. Beauty is a good thing; but I prefer not to see it paraded merely for the tickling of the groundlings, just as I hate to see it brought to the auction. I hope our æsthetic friend will see my point.

WHO WAS IT?

I have received another letter which I shall print with a few blanks; the management concerned will no doubt recognise its own likeness and hasten to do tardy justice to a body of employees who (if my information be correct) have been treated in anything but a Christmassy spirit by persons who should know better. Here is the epistle:—

> SIR,—The following may be of interest. I and some twenty-eight others were employed at the —— Theatre as —— in the great —— scene of ——, and on Saturday last were told to stand off till the Saturday week, no notice whatever being given to the men in question; and I understand that following the week of the 26th the theatre closes. As some of these men are married and have children to support I think, taking in consideration the time of year, some notice should have been given so that the men could have looked after other employment. The men attended on the afternoon of the 20th, but in the evening before going on sent word to the manager that they considered some sort of notice should be given them or compensation for this week. This the manager refused to do, and the men were paid off in the sum of 2s. (this latter sum is always held in hand), the total amount for the week, 16s.—two shows Wednesdays, two shows Saturdays.

As great play has been made in the Press by this particular management of the wonderful business that was done, whilst some other houses were obviously depressed, and as the responsible party is well-to-do, quite apart from any income that may arise from the theatre, I hope to hear that each of the employees so inconsiderately treated has received as solatium and a New Year's gift at least one week's wages. It is not well to grind the faces of the poor.

P.

A HAPPY LAND.

The Wise and Good have Billy's smile
And Teddy's approbation;
And now the topers for a while
At least escape Dame Nation.

W. B.

JOHN BULL'S WOMENFOLK.

By Mrs. Bull.

More and More and More.

Two more new societies concerning "Votes for Women." At this rate even those most interested in the movement will not be able to keep track of all the leagues "Pro" and "Anti." One of these new societies is of influential men headed by Lord Cromer, and is opposed to the franchise for women—the other, in favour, consists of actresses. All that "womanly influence" of which we hear so much will thus be brought to bear against an obdurate Cabinet. This new society is certainly smart and elegant. At its first public meeting, held at the Criterion Restaurant, beautiful celebrities in exquisite array were selling dainty pink and pale-green favours—the colours of the "Actresses' Franchise League"—vases of blossoms adorned the platform—speakers were presented with sweet little nosegays of rosebuds. Yet despite these frivolous accessories the actresses were very earnest and passed a most determined resolution demanding the franchise immediately—no feebly hesitating request, you see. The A.F.L. may well be satisfied with its members and supporters, for these number Mrs. Kendal, Violet and Irene Vanbrugh, Gertrude Elliott, Eva Moore, Mrs. Langtry, Ellen Terry, Jerome K. Jerome, Mr. and Mrs. George Alexander, Fanny Brough, Pauline Chase, Mr. Grein and Mr. Pinero. Mr. Forbes Robertson, who took the chair, made a charming speech, addressing the society as "Women of my calling," and confessed to having been born and reared in an atmosphere of woman's suffrage. But, on the whole, the speaking was far from brilliant; stage celebrities are evidently not orators. Most of them read their speeches, and that always has a dull, "cold-watery" effect.

What they Wore.

Brown seemed the most popular colour, while black hats were most strikingly popular. Miss Eva Moore was all in fawn, an artistic touch of colour being given by a bright green necklace. Her big hat was ornamented by a couple of huge made-up wings. Miss Edith Craig—Ellen Terry's daughter—wore black glacé silk accordian-pleated, lit up by a white yoke and piped with gilt. Her big black hat had a band of gold tinsel and two tremendously long quills. Miss Decima Moore—another of the black hat brigade—had a strikingly pretty gown of moonlight blue Roman satin, high-waisted and swathed. Miss Alice Crawford's fine figure showed to advantage in a simply made frock of green-cloth with numerous velvet buttons. Miss Fanny Brough looked fascinating and sweet and clever, and wore a simple tailor-made coat and skirt. Miss Gertrude Elliott was brilliant and sparkling in a violet velvet gown.

Art in Fans.

A new fan is quite one of those gifts that may be offered to those fortunate wealthy dames who seem to have already everything that heart can desire and money buy. Of course, the designers of fans strive very hard to make fashions come and go in these dainty trifles—for instance, they are full of assurances that if this year you appear with a large fan, you at once proclaim yourself hopelessly out of date. The new models are all being made very small, and are often designed to double in two so as to be slipped into a hand-bag. Dear little fans, like birds with outstretched wings, are made in the most vivid colourings—often the natural hues of tropical plumage—parrots and humming-birds. One very gorgeous specimen had ruby eyes and a gold beak. A very neat device for ladies who are given to dropping their belongings is a fan with a long handle, at the end of which is fixed a tiny pair of opera-glasses. I have recently seen a truly gorgeous lace fan. It had chased gold sticks, and boasted that its lace was studded with 360 real jewels. But at first sight one exclaimed, "Where are they then?" The gems were pearls and diamonds, and so daintily were they inserted in the meshes of the white lace as to be almost invisible. But very different was the effect, when beneath the glare of the strong light of a ball-room that bejewelled fan was waved to and fro by its stately owner.

The Matinée Toque.

In Paris, whence all our fashions hail, the matinée toque has entirely won the day, which means that in due time it will have its vogue in England. Really, tiny headgear is usually so becoming, one wonders that women do not jump at the chance of wearing these quaint, fascinating little confections at theatres. The Dutch bonnet, which for the moment is somewhat out of fashion for children, is now pluming itself proudly upon the heads of Frenchwomen. Beads and fur, and flowers—no plumes or feathers—are all most ingeniously employed. Imagine a wee flat fur toque, a twisted rope of pearls resting on the hair, the only other trimming being a beastie's head and tail. A little cluster of daintily puffed white velvet had on either side clusters of violets which met at the back, where a few fell quite low towards the neck. A small turban of palest pink covered with silver gauze was toned down by a big black jet buckle and dangling tassels, while a grey squirrel toque of the smallest dimensions was trimmed by clusters of crimson cherries made to fall behind each ear. Yet another—a Marie Stuart shape, in rich blue velvet—was edged with grey pearls, and elaborately embroidered on top with the pearls intermingled with silver thread. Last, but not least, imagine blue tulle swathed, trimmed with gold tassels and diamond-centred snowdrops.

Mothers!

Lemco offers you a Lemco-Thermos Flask FREE of cost

The Lemco-Thermos Flask keeps Lemco, or Lemco-and-Milk, hot for 24 hours without heat, cost or attention of any kind. In sickroom, kitchen, or nursery, or when travelling, it is priceless. Invaluable also to Cooks, Sportsmen, Invalids, and the Aged.

In the ordinary way you could not obtain the Lemco-Thermos Flask under 21s. Now (by arrangement with Thermos, Ltd.) users of Lemco may obtain one absolutely FREE!

LEMCO

IS PURE FRESH BEEF

in highly concentrated form. No colouring matter added to make it look strong, no water added to make it appear cheap. There is more beef per ounce in Lemco than in any other meat essence. You can use Lemco in hundreds of appetising ways. Write for a splendid book of Lemco Recipes—FREE.

HOW TO OBTAIN THE FLASK

To each user of Lemco sending before December 31, 1909, Weight Coupons representing 7lbs. of Lemco, we will send a Lemco-Thermos Flask FREE and carriage paid. Customers wishing to obtain a Flask sooner may send

5lbs. weight Coupons and deposit of 7/6
or 3lbs. " " " 10/-

☞ Deposit returned on receipt of balance of Coupons. ☜

Weight Coupons are under capsule of each jar.

Insist on Lemco, which is the original and only genuine Liebig Company's Extract of Beef—don't ask for Liebig's Extract.

Lemco Bonus Office, 4, Lloyd's Avenue, London, E.C.

BULL'S EYES.

SOME UNFOUNDED AND CONFOUNDED RUMOURS:—
That New Year's Eve at St. Paul's was a howling success.
That Tommy Burns to meet Johnson again.
That W. T. Stead can't keep up his spirits.
That Lloyd George went to Cannes to prepare for the "Can'ts."
That he thinks of women as the "fair" sex.
That President Falli:res has had a close shave.
That the Peers will be abolished by hook or by Crooks.
That that there are no unsolved crimes to occupy Scotland Yard.
That there is too much heir apparent in Servia.

The experiment of planting vineyards from which England can make her own wine is being tried. Wine not?

A New York banker named Poor has failed for a million. Poor creditors.

Why the Government won't dissolve. More "hot water" required.

Paris is suffering from aeroplanitis. But it is the Wright sort.

"Love Makes Heroines," says the *Star*. But heroines also make love.

A man recently charged with being intoxicated was John Drinkwater. What's in a name?

"London Opinion. Life's Latest Terror," says a recent poster. Rough on our contemporary.

Dr. H. R. D. Spitta has been appointed bacteriologist to the King. What an appropriate name.

"Old Moore" predicts that 1909 will be a "red year." To many people, however, the prospect is decidedly "blue."

"Doth not love furnish wings?" asks Dorothy Senior. Possibly, Dolly, but it is more appreciated when it furnishes a suburban villa.

At a recent wedding, the bride, bridegroom, and most of the guests were deaf and dumb. A quiet affair.

"Tariff Reform means Free Trade Snowed Under," says the *Express*. Which means that Tariff Reform is a-drift.

The Kaiser, we now dare affirm it,
Bids fair to become quite a hermit.
Ere he speaks, don't you know,
He must go to Beulow
And respectfully ask for a permit.

If it be true that the funeral rites of the late Emperor and Empress of China have cost £600,000 a royal death is indeed a national calamity.

"There is a universal law, 'Nothing stands,'" says E. Smart Bruce. We know another, "Everybody lies."

At Willesden, a dwarf was accused of violent behaviour. Apparently he was so small that he couldn't contain himself.

George Robey has written a book called, "My Life up to Now." Of course it is "To be continued."

"Must I let my husband in?" a woman asked Mr. Plowden recently. Most wives do.

"Nothing is final in this world," says Percy White. Except, of course, "the editor's decision" in an Anagram competition.

Candidates for the new Turkish Senate must be at least forty years of age. No Young Turks are required.

The *Musical Standard* says that the clergy are the most unmusical body of men upon the globe. Don't the reverend gents. patronise it?

The French Government have declined to abolish the death penalty. They evidently think it a capital punishment.

When saying that the English Church is "the greatest fact" in our history, does the *Guardian* remember that "facts are stubborn things"?

Lord Alverstone, who would "rather never win at all than win by a trick," evidently does not play bridge.

A German paper remarks that Society is like air. Certainly; very mixed.

When taking the oath, a juror at Bethnal Green asked which was his right hand, and had to be shown. Was this a dexter-ous attempt to avoid serving?

During the past twenty-five years, nearly a million divorces have been granted in the "United States." What's in a name?

"To love a good woman is a liberal education," says a contemporary. Certainly; it is astonishing how much she knows.

The Rev. R. J. Campbell recently warned his congregation that they were going to have "a dry sermon." Why?

In the window of a London fried fish shop the other day appeared the insidious legend, "Skates sold ear." Customers of the establishment are now in hourly anticipation of another announcement, "Boots soled and soled."

A sister of General Botha has been safely delivered of a son. Botha doing well.

The Pleasures of a Good Pipe Tobacco

are very real; so much so that many smokers buy expensive mixtures to endeavour to make sure of having them. Yet the required qualities are more :: dependent upon the selection and blend of the tobaccos used than high price.

Coolness, Fragrance, and that subtle and most pleasing quality, usually termed :: *flavour,* are entirely due to the art of blending and are not necessarily an accompaniment of high price.

Chairman

will meet the requirements of ninety smokers in every hundred; it has every good feature that a pipe tobacco can have, but particularly coolness. It is a pipe tobacco for to-day, to-morrow, and for every day—for the heavy smoker and for the occasional smoker, and one which will not burn the tongue.

Boardman's

is the same tobacco milder, and

Recorder

the same, but fuller flavoured.

From tobacconists everywhere, 5½d. per oz.

In case of difficulty, write to

R. J. LEA, Manchester.

V4

JOHN BULL'S LETTER BAG.

[THE EDITOR *replies to, and has a chat with, some of his numerous correspondents.*]

NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS.—Will readers, when sending cuttings from newspapers, take care that in each case a sufficient portion is sent to identify the name of the paper and the date of issue?

SPECIAL NOTICE.—*Owing to the great increase in the number of* ENQUIRIES *received, consequent upon the abnormal growth in our circulation, it is no longer possible to answer them all in "Letter Bag." The Editor will, however, in special cases, endeavour to reply by post to those correspondents who forward a stamped addressed envelope. When answers already standing in type have been published,* ONLY THOSE OF GENERAL INTEREST *will appear. The Editor will, of course, still be grateful for information, "biscuit" material, newspaper cuttings, &c., which will be duly acknowledged in these columns.*

If A. B. will send us his name and address in confidence, and inform us where a letter may be addressed to him, we shall be glad to rescue him from his present position.

J. H. J. (Handsworth), C. G. (Birmingham), W. K. (Wolverhampton), W. H. W. (Smethwick), S. S. (Saltley), H. A. (Small Heath), E. A. C. (Handsworth), H. W. D (Smethwick), E A. D. (Birmingham), J. A. B. (Wolverhampton), "Brum," J. M. (Birmingham), W. G. B. (Birmingham), J. E. D. (Birmingham), and most of the other residents in that district write to point out that their *Express and Star* is not a Birmingham but a Wolverhampton paper. They protest that Birmingham has already quite enough to put up with, and must not be expected to bear the burden of other towns. We are glad to have so many vigilant readers in the metropolis of Tariff Reform. The error arose from the peculiar title of the paper—*The Express and Star and Birmingham Evening Express.*

P. H. L. (Hull) says his home does not resemble that described by Jim Crow in his paper on "Second Class." He informs us that he does not sit about in his shirt-sleeves, or make a noise when he eats or drinks. In that case the cap did not fit.

"CATHOLICUS" (Wigan) objects to our remarks about a Roman Catholic priest who endeavoured to prevent a young man from marrying a Protestant. The letter, however, spoke for itself.

G. E. A. (South Hackney).—We must try to stir up the boys a bit. They are the trustees of posterity.

W. McK. (Aberdeen) sends us the result of charitable efforts on the part of religious bodies up there. Sales of work secured £1,318 19s. 1d. for the dogs' home, while a special appeal for the unemployed brought in £56 8s. 10d. If these appeals are repeated, we suggest "Is thy servant a dog?" as an appropriate text for the sermon.

J. M. (Rochdale).—Thanks for cutting about the man whose name was Edwin, but "was called George for short." By George!

A. G. B. (Leicester) writes to defend that beautiful hymn, "Hear the pennies dropping." He says he has found it very useful "for missionary purposes," particularly when used in conjunction with a glass collection-box. "However," he concludes, "while even the pennies are given with a glad heart and freely to the Lord for His use, whether they be given from the children or the parents, we will still sing our hymn of praise and prayer." Chorus, gentlemen!

M. C. M. (Brighton), G. E. (Hayward's Heath), F. C. (Reading), and others answered an advertisement of Bonham. Ward and Co. about the Indian children, but only obtained a request for a guinea. No Indian children! M. C. M. was asked when she could receive the children, and was told that if she paid the fee she would be put in touch with the parents at once. Having sent the money and heard nothing satisfactory, she had better consult a solicitor. F. C. had a similar answer from Abbotsford and Hillier, and wants to know about Mrs. Leslie Malcom.

S. H. (Nottingham), S. T. (Lewes), M. M. (Brighton), "Twickenham," S. T. R. (Woodhouse), and others correct a mistake made by our tame poet, who attributed to Byron a phrase which rightly belongs to Eliza Cook.

"BROOKSMITHITE" (Boyne House, Cheltenham) has been reading Crow on "Youth," and thinks Crow cannot prophesy that any of the rising generation will turn out such an accomplished liar as himself. Crow's correspondent says, "one can see the self-conceit oozing out *(sic)* every pore in you, since you think, that because you in your youth indulged in all sorts of repulsive habits it follows of necessity that all the young members of the male sex do likewise. What can *you* have to say about manners? . . . . You, in your self-conceit, consider yourself the ideal man, when in reality you are more of a beast than of a sane, human being . . . . Thou hypocrite . . . . You are beneath contempt, you loathsome creature, and I dare you through the columns of JOHN BULL to answer this letter, and show that in the black rottenness of your heart there is a small amount of something human, and that you are not all beast. I can safely say that though I am your inferior in years, I am your superior in character." Unfortunately "Brooksmithite" has forgotten to mention his name, so there is no opportunity of testing the superiority of his character. Meanwhile, Jim has sent a nice pickled birch to Boyne House as a Christmas present, with his compliments and good wishes.

J. S. M. (St. Albans) writes: "Desimber 3rd. Der sir I would best to now of tredway. is Honesy in there dellings." Just what we thought.

W. J. W. (Manor Park) would like half a column of chess every week and a reprint of biscuits.

"BRIGHTON" (Aberbargoed) says that "if conceit was consumption," our German correspondent "would have been dead years ago." "Brighton" must read about the One and All in the newspapers and judge for himself.

"STEVE."—Glad to see your muse has been at work again. Jim is looking out for your promised epic to wish him a happy new nose. He notes that he is not to prod "mouldy, moth-eaten minds" with a poisoned dagger. How could he?

Indigestion
must yield

Mother Seigel's Syrup puts your stomach and liver in healthy working order, and that is the end of indigestion. Your food digests freely and naturally, your body is nourished, and all impurities are driven from your system. Writing on January 7 last, Mr. James Hainsworth, 27, Shetcliffe Lane, Waggon House, Tong Street, Bradford, Yorks, says:—"I had no taste for food, and what I ate seemed to lie on my chest for hours. Sometimes I had a nasty sick feeling, and I was much troubled with wind and dizziness. But when I began taking Mother Seigel's Syrup I soon felt better, and now I am all right again."

TO MOTHER
SEIGEL'S
SYRUP

Mother Seigel's Syrup is now also prepared in Tablet Form and sold under the name of Mother Seigel's Syrup Tablets. Price 2s. 9d. per bottle. One size only.

SANDORIDES
2oz's 1/3 MILD or MEDIUM
Lucana
MIXTURE
4oz's 2/6 MILD or MEDIUM

A TOBACCO OF SUBTLE CHARM

Lucana Mixture is the limit of luxury in Pipe-smoking. It is made from pure and selected leaf, the thick stalk being carefully eliminated, giving a cool and healthy smoke. It is, in fact,

THE TOBACCO YOU HAVE BEEN WAITING FOR

PACKED IN PATENT VACUUMISED TINS AND SOLD BY LEADING TOBACCONISTS EVERYWHERE, OR POST FREE DIRECT FROM

W. SANDORIDES & Co. LD
5, OLD BOND ST., LONDON, W

DOCTORS AND RADIUM.

New Book Reveals its Remarkable Powers in Healing all Skin Disorders.

OPINIONS OF FAMOUS SCIENTISTS.

Extraordinary revelations about Radium and its wondrous powers as a curative agent, more especially in skin disorders, are contained in a book just published. It cites some remarkable instances of cures accomplished by this mysterious new substance, often, too, in cases hitherto considered incurable.

Especially interesting is the chapter containing expressions of opinion concerning the preventive and curative properties of Radium from many of the foremost leaders of medical and scientific thought. Among those who have endorsed it are such well-known specialists as:—

Sir WM. RAMSAY.
Prof. DARWIN.
Prof. ASCHKINASS.
Prof. CASPERI.
Prof. RUTHERFORD.
Prof. DANYSS.
Prof. WINKLER.
Prof. BERTHES.
Prof. EXNER.
Prof. SCHIFF.
Prof. LASSAR.
Prof. Hon. R. J. STRUTT.
Dr. O. DANLOS.
Dr. CONTRE-MOULINS.
Dr. KEINBOCK.
Dr. HOLZKNECHT.
Dr. SCHOLTZ.
Dr. HIMSTEDT.
Dr. HAMPSON.
Dr. LUKSCH.
Dr. NEUSSER.
Dr. WICKHAM.
Dr. DEGRAIS.
Dr. FOURNIER.
Dr. TIZZONI.
Dr. BONGIOVANNI.
Dr. KASSABIAN.
Dr. DIEFFENBACH.

This unanimity of scientific opinion is all the more remarkable considering the incredulity with which the claims of Radium as a therapeutic agent were received by the medical profession only a few years ago. In an extraordinarily short period of time the whole attitude of the medical profession has changed, and Radium is now recognised as an orthodox healing agent by the leading dermatologists and physicians throughout the world.

POWERFUL CURATIVE PROGRESS.

Hitherto the expense of producing Radium has been one of the chief obstacles in the way of its general use—it costs £340,000 to produce a pound of chemically pure Radium. But an ingenious process of applying Radium for use in the form of a salve has recently been discovered by Dr. Saubermann, which greatly cheapens its cost to the public, and enables it to be supplied to them at a very reasonable price.

Dr. Saubermann's Radium Salve is described in the book under review. It is, says the author, a scientific salve, with which Radium is blended in chemically exact proportions, and the effect is of an intensely healing character. On being applied to the skin, a pleasant tingling sensation is almost immediately felt. This is the beginning of Radium's powerful curative process, the new and fresh life imbibed by the cells imparts itself gradually to the deeper portions of the skin, and the latter becomes regenerated by the Radium rays, the bad and poisonous cell-elements being eliminated and replaced by fresh and healthy ones. The skin in time becomes smooth and rosy, and the fine blood-vessels on the surface fill up with normally pure blood, imparting to the skin a fresh and healthy colour. The germs of disease are destroyed, and the tissues healed and invigorated in a wonderful manner. It is, in short, the application of "Nature's greatest and most potent force" for curative purposes.

A list of the skin diseases amenable to treatment by the use of this Salve includes:—

Eczema
Psoriasis
Birth Marks
Wrinkles
Rodent Ulcers
Lupus.
Scrofula
Old Wounds
Ringworm
Carbuncles
Scalp Sores
Swollen Knees
Scabies
Glandular Swellings
Diseased Ankles
Diseased Hips
Bad Legs.
Festering Sores
Running Sores
Poisoned Cuts
Boils
Abscesses
Barber's Itch
Bed Sores
Sprains and Strains
Lumbago
Rheumatism and all malignant growths.

Every application of Radium Salve on the skin has a magical effect. Birth-marks and "port-wine stains" are permanently removed, new and normal flesh tissue gradually replacing the defective and disfigured tissue.

RADIUM BATHS AT HOME.

It has also been discovered that baths impregnated with Radium even in the smallest degree have powerful curative properties in such ailments as rheumatism, lumbago, sciatica, neuralgia, etc., and scientists now recognise that the waters of the great Spas all over the world owe their healing and health-restoring powers principally to the presence of Radio-active "ions" contained in them. Dr. Showers' Radium Bath Salts enable a person to have a Radium bath in his or her own home. Radium Bath Salts contain Radium Salts blended with the genuine natural salts extracted from the famous Sebastian mineral spring at Aix-la-Chapelle, in Germany. They make an ordinary bath powerfully radio-active, and relieve and cure many blood and nervous disorders, including, in addition to those already mentioned, epilepsy, locomotor ataxia, paralysis, and other diseases of the brain and spinal cord. They are especially effective in rheumatic affections, disperse and dissolve the tissue-penetrating powers of the Salts, and promote a healthy flow of pure, rich blood.

Although the prices at which Radium Salve and Radium Salts are sold may appear somewhat high, it must be remembered that owing to the priceless value of Radium and the extraordinary potency of the Radium rays, very small quantities only are necessary to produce marked beneficial results, and each supply contains a sufficient quantity for one month's treatment. Anything, however, that will cure such terrible diseases as those mentioned above can scarcely be considered dear at any price. Radium Salve is sold in four strengths, at 5s., 10s., 20s., and 30s., and the Radium Bath Salts in two strengths at 5s. and 10s. Both preparations are procurable from all high-class stores and chemists, or direct, carriage paid, from Dept. J.B.3, The Cardinal Manufacturing Co., 1 to 5, Wilson Street, Finsbury, London, E.C., on receipt of P.O. or cheque with order.

In the book to which reference has been made, "John Bull" readers will find many interesting facts about the possibilities of Radium in the treatment and cure of disease.

Any reader of "John Bull" desirous of studying the wonders of Radium, Radium Salve, and Radium Bath Salts, should write at once for this remarkably interesting treatise. They will receive a copy gratis on applying to the Secretary (Dept. J.B.3), Cardinal Manufacturing Co. (Ltd.), 1, 3, and 5, Wilson Street, Finsbury, London, E.C., and enclosing a penny stamp for postage. The first edition was quickly exhausted, and the demand for the second edition recently issued from the press is already so great that early application is necessary to ensure receipt of a copy. All applications will be dealt with strictly in the order of their arrival.

TO MEDICAL MEN.

To afford the entire medical profession an opportunity of testing the unique curative properties of Dr. Saubermann's Radium Salve, The Cardinal Manufacturing Co. will send a sample pot without charge to any qualified physician (whose name is on the medical register) on receipt of stamped addressed envelope.—[ADVT.]

GOLD MEDAL TAILORING:

WELL-KNOWN MEN

WHO WEAR

CURZON'S CLOTHING

TO MEASURE.

Dr. ALLINSON.
Mr. EUSTACE MILES.
Mr. DUDLEY HARDY.
Mr. JULIUS ZANZIG.
Mr. LIONEL BROUGH.
Mr. R. G. KNOWLES.
Mr. MONTAGUE HOLBEIN.
Mr. CARL HERTZ.
Rev. CANON DAVIDSON.
Rev. R. J. CAMPBELL.
The Count UBALDO BENI.
J. P. DOWNEY, M.P.
Lieut.-Col. A. E. BELCHER.
Hon. G. E. FOSTER, M.P., House of Commons, Ottawa.
FRANK RHODES, Esq., Secretary, G.P.O., Bloemfontein, O.R.C.
Lieut.-Colonel Dr. S. H. GLASGOW.
The Honourable R. R. FITZGERALD.
Senor Dr. SIMON PLANCO SUAREZ, Minister and Ambassador of Nicaragua.
Major-General J. C. KINCHANT.
GUNNER MOIR.

Why not let us make your Clothes?

"THERE'S COMFORT IN THE CURZON CUT."

That we have reached the high water mark in Tailoring value and excellence is proved by the fact that we have secured the Gold Medal Diploma at the Franco-British Exhibition. No matter where you live, we guarantee to fit you.

OUR SELF-MEASUREMENT SYSTEM is perfection itself, and is so sure that we guarantee to refund a client's money in full if we are not able to satisfy in every detail.

SEND A POSTCARD FOR FREE PATTERNS, latest fashion plates, unique lists of testimonials, and instructions for accurate self-measurement. All sent free and carriage paid. Those who are able to call should visit our showrooms.

Complete Satisfaction Given or we Refund Money.

SUITS TO MEASURE from 28/6 to 60/-
OVERCOATS TO MEASURE, from 21/- to 55/-

Awarded Gold Medal Franco-British Exhibition.

CURZON BROS. Go to Curzon's

The World's Measure Tailors.

(Dept. 191), 60-62, CITY ROAD, LONDON, E.C.

(Within five minutes of Moorgate Street, Metropolitan, and Tube Railways, and Liverpool Street Railways.)

Please mention this paper.

"ANTI-VADERLAND" (Park Place) says he is surprised our correspondent did not remind us that Waterloo was won by the Germans, "a fable which is seriously taught in all the schools over there." But there is *some* truth in the statement, isn't there?

H. C. J. (Haverstock Hill) is very angry with a lady who wrote to the papers alleging indecent assault by chuckers-out at the Albert Hall. He says: "I might mention that, for the devilish purposes of a woman, I am recorded upon a certain political register as 'dead.' I am alive and still enjoy the sunshine and warmth which the land and its people extend towards me." We in our ignorance always imagined that the sunshine emanated from the sun.

E. M. K. (Littlehampton) says that the laws of the Catholic Church are for Catholics, and that outsiders have no more right to protest than they would have about German laws for German people. We agree that the young man in question might just as well have been married in a Roman Catholic Church, but his refusal did not justify the violence of the priest. Many thanks for kind sympathy.

H. G. (Brixton) does not like the horse in one of our recent cartoons because both right legs are forward at the same time when walking. He forgets, however, that the horse represented the Liberal Party! Ahem!

B. O. (Ebury Street) says that "liberty is a splendid thing, but has nothing in common with" our "special views for the guidance of Roman Catholics." She defends the action of the priest who tried to break a young lady's engagement with a Protestant.

"UBIQUE" (Bromley).—We are deeply touched by your kind remarks, and note that "the firing apparatus of a big gun consists of an electric battery and a pistol-grip," which has a trigger. We trust you are right in saying that "Clouds gather. Still they all have silver linings. Let us hope yours have golden ones."

"DISGUST" (Tottenham) wrote on December 18: "Dear Bull,—God help us next week 'A Merry Christmas,' by Jim Crow! Can't you possibly manage to leave *him* out for the Christmas festivities?" But Crow was fairly mellow after all. It was rash to assume that the article on "The Origin of Sin" was "the silly piffle that generally flows from Jim's misguided pen."

R. J. M. (Richmond).—You can scarcely compare that noisy priest with the good Samaritan.

G. S. S. (Exeter).—Of course Mr. Dunn is M.P. for Camborne. We are exiling our printer to the Scilly Isles.

"BRISTOL" says that Judd and Co.'s agents take orders for goods which are never delivered, but take no money from the people they visit. Then what is the object of all their labours?

J. W. P. (Walthamstow).—We are afraid we cannot possibly find space for your long letter about marriages between Romanists and heretics. We content ourselves with noting that you consider them very wrong.

"SKATER" (Balham) complains about the skating rink at Earl's Court. He says floor tickets are advertised and sold at 6d. each, and have printed on them "for use of own skates on floor," but on reaching the floor a skater has to pay another 6d. for the privilege of using his own skates, whereas he can hire skates at 6d. or 1s., according to quality. He hears that at Olympia the charges are 1s. for floor tickets and another 1s. for use of own skates. The charges ought to be made more clear.

A. J. C. (South Hackney) says that, as the man who brings his own skates does not pay for their hire, the proprietors "would do their best to get their due pound of flesh by charging more for the season ticket." *Due* pound of flesh?

"A YOUTH AND SECOND CLASS" (London, S.E.) attributes second-childhood and no class to Jim Crow.

G. W. N. (Sunderland) asks, "If our present King had no sons, who would be heir to the English throne?" If he had never had any sons, the answer would be his eldest daughter. But he had.

A. C. T. (Plymouth).—It was certainly odd of the widow to put "Glory for me" at the end of an announcement of her husband's death. We do not know what our bankers would say if we started giving cheques for biscuits.

M. S. (Barnes) wants a smart cob and trap to travel about the country and advertise not only JOHN BULL but "a wonderful recipy for hair and rheumatics." We did not know they went together.

A. C. (Wakefield).—"*Best* and *only* church and Conservative newspaper is almost worth a biscuit, but we are growing a bit particular nowadays about the numerous claimants on our bakery.

"SCEPTIC" (Smethwick).—We have formed no opinion about the genuineness of fasting men, but we would not run very fast to see one.

M. J. K. (Harlesden).—We are afraid we cannot suggest any remedy for employment swindles, except that the police should tackle them instead of worrying innocent persons.

A. G. (Seacombe).—The Imperial Merchant Service Guild has lately been very active in circularising the Press and M.P.'s with reference to a captain's grievance against the Board of Trade

B. S., jun. (Forest Gate), writes to "indict Holy Communion and Confirmation as idolatrous and superstitious." But we are not a Church paper.

M. H. F. (Upton Park) informs us that at the East Ham Palace of Varieties Mr. Dan Thomas, in his pantomime, announces that our Editor, Mr. Robert Sievier, and Mr. Solly Joel are all members of the Y.M.C.A., and asks whether the statement is correct. We are not in a position to speak for Messrs. Sievier and Joel, but, as regards ourselves, alas, we are no longer young!

J. McC. (Leith) says he never heard of a Jew being described as "an Irishman, "especially when he is a Pole." We always thought all Jews were described officially as Scotchmen. N.B., not Scotsmen.

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THE BATTLE WITH PREJUDICE.

All great reforms that have tended to shake settled beliefs or to upset established methods have had to contend with both prejudice and violent opposition. It has been so in religion, in politics, in banking, in finance, and so it has been in the establishment of the London and Paris Exchange, Limited, an institution founded to give greater and more extended facilities for financial transactions and dealing in and obtaining advances on Stock Exchange securities. The directors wish to congratulate their supporters that, notwithstanding all this opposition, they have succeeded in establishing their enterprise, and they are convinced, from the progressive advancement of their business, that they occupy to-day a high position in public favour. The sound and liberal principles on which the business is conducted justify the belief that future years will witness a continuance of steady and healthy expansion, and bring increased prosperity.

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To-day investment is on very different lines from what it was twenty, or even ten, years ago. The sphere of investment has been considerably broadened, and methods have become greatly diversified.

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M. S. (Wandsworth Road).—We often exposed the swindler Ironmonger, of Ilkeston.

"RIVERSIDE" (Thames Ditton) says that his Urban Council "have not only broken their own bye-laws, but have spent three-quarters of an hour discussing a motion which was irregular under their standing orders." That sounds somewhat Socialistic.

MR. CLIFTON BINGHAM, who informs us that he is "a somewhat well-known man," objects to the use of the word gentleman in describing someone who was summoned for reckless motor-driving. It is a common error to imagine that gentility is a question of conduct instead of birth and position. A shady solicitor, for instance, is popularly—but, we believe, incorrectly—spoken of as a gentleman by Act of Parliament."

"BRIGHTONIAN" thinks that the new car on the L.B. and S.C.R. should be run twice daily, so that Brightonians as well as Londoners might take advantage of it. She thinks the company anything but a blessing, and wants more cheap day-return tickets. She must agitate, *agitate*, AGITATE!

"W. D." (Grosvenor Street) says a friend of his went into Lyons's "teashop in the West, and asked for a poached egg on toast and a ginger beer." The waitress said: "In a glass?" and the customer, thinking of the ginger beer, answered in the affirmative. When a beverage was produced, he said: "What did you give me a lemon squash for?" Then he found that the egg had been put into the ginger beer. What funny lunches some people do have!

R. G. B. (Aldershot).—Yes, we saw the big petition in favour of the inspection of conventual institutions, and quite agreed with it.

T. J. T. (Gloucester).—It was quite an inspiration on the part of the *Gloucester Chronicle* to quote the *Times* of 23rd October as reporting what Mr. Churchill said in the House of Commons five days later. We wish we could do the same.

W. H. C. (Manchester) says he warned the Bishops that, if they voted for the Licensing Bill, he "would bring about the disestablishment and disendowment of the Church of England." How does he propose to set about it? Why not abolish the House of Lords, too, while he is on the job? It is always a mistake to take two bites at a cherry.

"SMELLER" (Wandsworth) draws attention to the danger run by people who stand in the queue outside the pit door at Drury Lane, "where there is a short pipe, open at the top, which is a sewer ventilator." We never cease to marvel over the impudence of theatre managers in refusing to open their doors as soon as the public is ready to come in.

"PRO BONO PUBLICO" (Nottingham) wants to know whether any light can be thrown upon the facts concerning the disappearance and recovery of the child Seigir, and wants to know if it was a put-up job. We are not an all-seeing Providence.

A. C. (Cleethorpes) saw an advertisement offering to buy false teeth, and only received a P.O. for 1s. in return for two sets. But the purchasers only wanted any gold there might be on the plates. There is no market for false *teeth*.

"Charley" (Leyton), L. (North Finchley), T. H. (Leyton), W. C. (Folkestone), Mrs. M. J. C. G. (Plymouth), "Argus" (Hampstead), W. E. E. (Ilford), W. H. J. (Aldershot), R. P. (Batterica Park), F. W. P. (Wakefield), G. W. B. (Wimbledon), G. K. H. (Leicester), T. F. C. (Bedford), J. E. B. (Clapham Park), N. O. L. (Plymouth), W. S. (Wimbledon), W. W. (Ayr), T. M. (Aldershot), W. T. G. (Colchester), K. A. S. (Leicester), H. W. D. (Penge), D. W. R. (Darwen), E. W. (Neath), W. J. L. (Ealing), Illegible Signature (Muswell Hill), K. P. (Willesden), A. S. A. (Dover), V. H. B. (Cheltenham), J. B. (Essex), "Guinea Winner" (Stafford), L. N. (Stamford Hill), J. S. B. (Leytonstone), W. P. (Great Portland Street), F. H. (Harlesden), J. G. R. (Black Boy Lane), "Nansen" (Blackheath), F. W. (Ware), H. C. F. (Newport), E. W. I. (Sheffield), A. E. A. (Tipton), A. E. (Clapton), W. V. (Oxford), S. S. (Luton), G. H. (Liverpool), D. B. (Bognor), J. G. H. (Oldham), J. H. (Spring Gardens), M. C. B. (Sydenham), T. F. R. C. (Hounslow), Mrs. E. H. (Gateshead), J. W. H. (Penrith), H. H. (Leicester), P. C. (Fulham), W. F. (Ilford), R. B. (Sheffield), A. C. T. (Ramsey), T. B. (Hull), W. E. S. (Fulham), A. C. (East Ham), "Crike," S. V. (Newcastle), "Razoma," W. S. (Upper Clapton), G. W. (Dalston), W. E. K. (Fenchurch Avenue), A. M. J. (Wimbledon), F. B. (Leytonstone), E. J. H. (Penge), W. H. C. (Old Kent Road), G. W. R. (Rhondda), C. F. B. (Thornton Heath), R. A. W. (Harrogate), E. S. H. (Sittingbourne), R. J. Y. (Cardiff), J. E. P. (Bootle), G. H. B. (Coventry), W. H. S. (Rugby), H. B. (Brighton), E. W. (Keighley), H. S. McL. (Glasgow), S. H. L. (South Hampstead), C. H. (Brixton Hill), "Ivor" (Prestatyn), "Weasel" (Brighton), E. B. (London, N.), Mrs. B. (Arundel), A. H. M. (Lavender Hill), H. B. J. (Ashby de la Zouche), A. H. G. R. (Gloucester), F. J. C. (Peckham), W. J. (Bridge of Weir), Miss T. (Crewe), T. J. G. (Bowes Park), A. S. (Hull), Mrs. M. B. (Leyton), L. C. (New Southgate), "Eta" (Forest Hill), Miss S. S. (Thornton Heath), S. D. (Wandsworth), W. B. (Cable Street), B. R. (Castleton), W. W. (Brachford), J. G. D. (Godalming), W. C. E. (Manchester), G. F. K. (Cheapside), C. J. (Victoria), R. K. E. (Cardiff), C. P. (Didsbury), E. E. B (New Cross), C. F. (Clapham Park), F. W. W. (Holloway), A. T. C. (Kilburn), A. E. W. (East India Road), H. J. G. (Bristol), L. R. (Bow), R. J. M. (Manchester), T. O. P. (East Wickham), R. M. K. (Clewer), G. T. W. (Kentish Town), E. B. (Harlesden), A. W (Coventry), F. F. C. (Wood Green), C. S. W. (Brixton), F. H. R. (Swindon), C. M. K. (Kingstown), W. A. A. (Dublin), A. J. O. (Ashford), W. E. M. (Lee), J. A. H. (Southwick), W. J. W. (Bridgnorth), F. N. (Forest Hill), A. J. S. (Reading), T. S. B. (Glasgow), Mrs. J. C. S. (Benton), J. I. (Gateshead), L. V. S. (Holloway), Mrs. C. (Cardiff), E. P. (Streatham), "Bill Yards," J. McC. (Rock Ferry), P. and S. H. C. (Manchester), W. H. (Luton), I. B. F. (Cardiff), A. B. (Ipswich), S. W. P. (Sunderland), A. S. (Wakefield), S. K. (Cardiff), W. F. (Sheffield), J. C. (South Hackney). *Alla vostra salute.*

We regret we are obliged to hold over a large number of replies.)

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Part II. treats of Nervous Troubles. An interesting discussion on the nervous system is given. Then follow the various Nervous complaints—Neurasthenia, Insomnia, Paralysis, Neuralgia, Locomotor Ataxy, Epilepsy, Chorea (St. Vitus' Dance). It tells how each and every one of these complaints can be cured, and lots of medical evidence is given in support of it.

Part III.—This chapter is devoted to the various forms of Rheumatic Troubles. It gives the experiments and opinions of many celebrated physicians in their untiring efforts to find a cure for Rheumatism, Sciatica, Lumbago, Gout, and Backache, and explains how a cure can be had for each that is certain and lasting.

Part IV.—The Stomach, Liver and Kidneys are here dealt with. Dyspepsia, Constipation, Diarrhœa and Dysentery are described in detail. The opinions of such well-known medical men as Drs. Rockwell, Erb, de Watteville, Turner, Seidel, and many others are given. A means of permanent cure which has proved successful in hundreds of cases is also explained.

Part V.—Various complaints, such as those of the Bladder, Deafness, Asthma, Cramps, Eczema, Chilblain, Headache and Catarrh are described. Detailed experiments are given as to the peculiar and astonishing effect that electricity has on these troubles.

Part VI.—In this chapter only complaints peculiar to women are treated. Female complaints, Anæmia, and Hysteria, are exhaustively described. A host of eminent doctors' opinions are quoted. The abuses of electricity and the importance of health are also dealt with, and, lastly, a copy of the Certificate of Merit awarded by *Science Siftings* to the "Ajax" Dry-Cell Batteries, as well as the expert testimony of the well-known scientist, W. Lascelles-Scott, Esq. The Battery has also received some very favourable comments from the Editor of JOHN BULL, as well as many other Press endorsements.

The work is not only the most interesting, but the most valuable from a health point of view that has ever been published. The "Ajax" Dry-Cell Body Battery is a scientific appliance that has done more for weak and ailing people than any remedy known. It is a "last-resort" treatment in the most obstinate cases. The peculiar construction of the battery, which enables it to generate a strong and continuous current with no charging whatever, makes it a convenient and pleasant treatment. An eminent physician recently said: "No body properly charged with electricity can be weak."

Every man or woman who is in any way ailing, who is weak or debilitated, etc., should not be without this book. A postcard or a letter to The British Electric Institute (Dept. 41), 25, Holborn Viaduct, London, E.C., will bring it at once. All advice is free, and a free test to all who call.—[ADVT.]

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RACING NOTES.

By W. LOTHIAN.
("Larry Lynx" of "The People," and "Magpie" of "The Globe.")

Odds and Ends.

The Johannesburg Christmas Meeting was a record one, the stakes offered aggregating nearly £11,000.

H. Stokes, the jockey who rides for Renwick's stable in the North next year, became a benedict on Monday.

The well-known Teddy Elliott, who is becoming one of the magnates and leaders in Tattersall's Ring, desires it to be known that he has no connection whatever with A. E. Elliott who is advertising and circularising as a starting price commission agent.

Owners Practically Controlled.

It is not generally known to those who follow racing that every trainer has not alone to apply to train horses each January, and name for whom he is training, but immediately he receives a horse into his care he has to submit to the authorities the name of the animal and its owner and have consent to train it.

An Irish Derby Candidate.

That popular Irish sportsman, Mr. A. H. Ledlie, has sent his two-year-old Electric Boy to Mr. Peebles' establishment at Upavon, to be trained for future engagements. The colt is by Speed (the sire of Velocity) from Palotta, the dam of Americus Girl, and is engaged in next season's Derby and Leger.

Prophetic.

Plumpton usually spells "Gore," and the Findon stable will doubtless pick up two or three races with their many representatives. ST. O'BRIEN, for instance, who is so handy, and will appreciate the character of the course, may win Friday's or Saturday's hurdle handicap, and even HILL CLIMBER might make his *début* in a paltry maiden plate here with success. BATTLE BIRD will take beating for the Maiden Hurdle Race, and should be supported each way.

There is a better programme next week at Windsor, where the hurdle handicap should go to

WOLFKIN,—

who is extremely well treated, especially after his Newbury success, being considered 5 lbs. worse than a young horse, such as BACK ANSWER. The second afternoon's Castle Handicap Steeplechase will, in my opinion fall to

CARSEY,

who, claiming the allowance, will be meeting Sweet Cecil on only 1 lb. worse terms than when he beat him so summarily at Newbury. Carsey ran wide at last week's Windsor meeting, or might have even beaten Lord Chatham. Another horse for whom a success is assuredly due in the near future is

THE DRUDGE,

who, in East's hands, ought to win the Inglefield Handicap.

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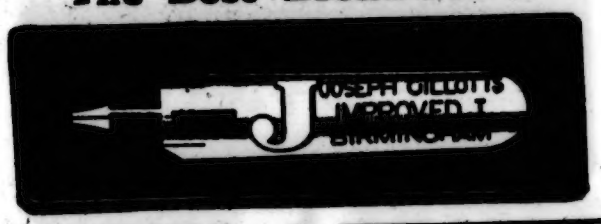

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The following claims have been received for the issues of October 31st, and November 14th and 21st:—

F. VERNON, 1, Bollands Terrace, Landor Street, Birmingham. (No. 64987—October 31st.)

RICHD. C. HUGHES, c.o. Miss Thurston, Refreshment Room, George's Landing Stage, Liverpool. (No. 11572—November 14th.)

J. NICHOLLS, Boden House, Hillaries Road, Gravelly Hill, Birmingham. (No. 167549—November 21st.)

W. E. DEWEY, 30, Wright Street, Small Heath, Birmingham. (No. 226954—November 21st.)

F. LEONARD POOLE, 42, Stapleton Road, Balham, S.W. (No. 239407—October 31st.)

H. W. PHELPS, 18, Ledaw Buildings, Bourne Estate, Leather Lane, E.C. (No. 129994—November 21st.)

The following are the fifty numbers for our issue of December 5:—

196; 3402; 11007; 14113; 19554; 23888; 30196; 39134; 43783; 51587; 53573; 56000; 59496; 66102; 71185; 71507; 73684; 80552; 91991; 93,403; 99565; 113907; 123584; 127736; 141184; 141853; 149576; 158715; 158102; 167060; 171062; 176110; 184773; 190455; 191868; 197134; 205759; 207582; 210000; 223129; 234877; 239133; 246495; 247061; 249573; 265719; 278177; 284981; 293204; 298165.

INITIAL FIGURES SHOULD BE DISREGARDED, BUT FINAL ONES ARE, OF COURSE, RECKONED.

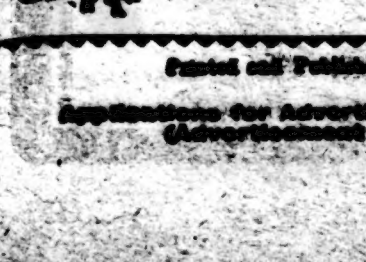
THE FIRST NUMBERS IN RESPECT OF THIS WEEK WILL BE ANNOUNCED IN OUR ISSUE DATED FEBRUARY 6TH (PUBLISHED FEBRUARY 4TH).

The Ballad of Peter Pompous-gentus

Now Peter Pompousgentus was a most important man,
His like had never yet been known e'er since the world began.

But Peter Pompous' family all thought it different quite,
For he bullied and he grumbled from morning until night.

Peter's wife 'nigh mad was sent, and cried in grief at last,
She "wished that she could tie his tongue, and tie it strong and fast!"



He grumbled at the butter, he grumbled at the tea,
And thought a more afflicted man — well, never could there be.

Now things were in a dreadful state, when Peter's anxious wife,
Being weary of the trials and struggles of her stormy life,

To the forest was repairing, there to "lay her down and die"
(She had some of her own pastry to end her troubles by).

But she passed a happy couple, who discussed their future lot,
And she listened to them speaking of the joy that they had got.

The bride-elect said to her beau, with sundry shy, coy jerks:
"Yes, darling, when we're married we will buy our tea from Pearks'."

O, happy thought! Peter's poor wife to Pearks' straightway went she,
And purchased there some coffee, some butter, and some tea.

And Peter, when he tasted, a smile spread o'er his face.
"My dear! Well, this is lovely!" he said, with stately grace.

And now the Pompous family, their troubles left behind,
A happier or more pleasant one, I don't believe you'll find.

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